

Bertucci's Dismisses Two of MIT's Offers To Accept TechCASH

By Ryan Ko
STAFF REPORTER

Bertucci's has declined two offers from MIT within the past two months to accept TechCASH at its popular location in Central Square, according to Undergraduate Association Dining Committee Chair Christopher K. Hoffman '08.

A campus-wide survey conducted by the UA in the first week of November 2007 initially suggested Bertucci's as one of two restaurants to be approached by MIT regarding TechCASH. According to Hoffman, Bertucci's was the "overwhelming favorite" in the survey, with around 20 percent of students voting for it. The runner-up was the Pour House Bar and Grill in Boston, a popular restaurant for students.

Director of Enterprise Services John M. McDonald initially approached Bertucci's over winter vacation with a standard TechCASH offer — similar to those presented to other off-campus vendors. According to Hoffman, the offer involves the purchasing of an additional card reader similar to a credit card reader, as well as the use of a phone line or internet connection. MIT would also charge a per-use fee, according to McDonald. "We typically negotiate

with each vendor [the contract] and the fee used to cover the costs of our TechCASH system," he said.

Bertucci's declined both MIT's initial offer and a second, improved offer, said Hoffman. Regarding the per-transaction fee in the second offer, Director of Campus Dining Richard D. Berlin III said, "We went as low as we could ever go."

Bertucci's was unavailable for comment.

"The fee wasn't as much a stumbling block with Bertucci's as the nights of operation," said McDonald. Campus dining halls are least accessible on Friday and Saturday nights, which are already Bertucci's busiest nights, according to McDonald. The UA survey was to identify dining options for students on nights when campus dining is unavailable, said Hoffman. Pour House is a very popular option for students on Saturday nights because of its half price burger promotion.

On Feb. 3, Hoffman asked the UA Senate and UA Dining Committee via e-mail to solicit letters from their respective constituencies asking Bertucci's to accept TechCASH. Hoffman has since compiled several

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Petek Saracoglu '09 performs "The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy" at a rehearsal of "The Vagina Monologues." The Monologues will be performed this Friday and Saturday.



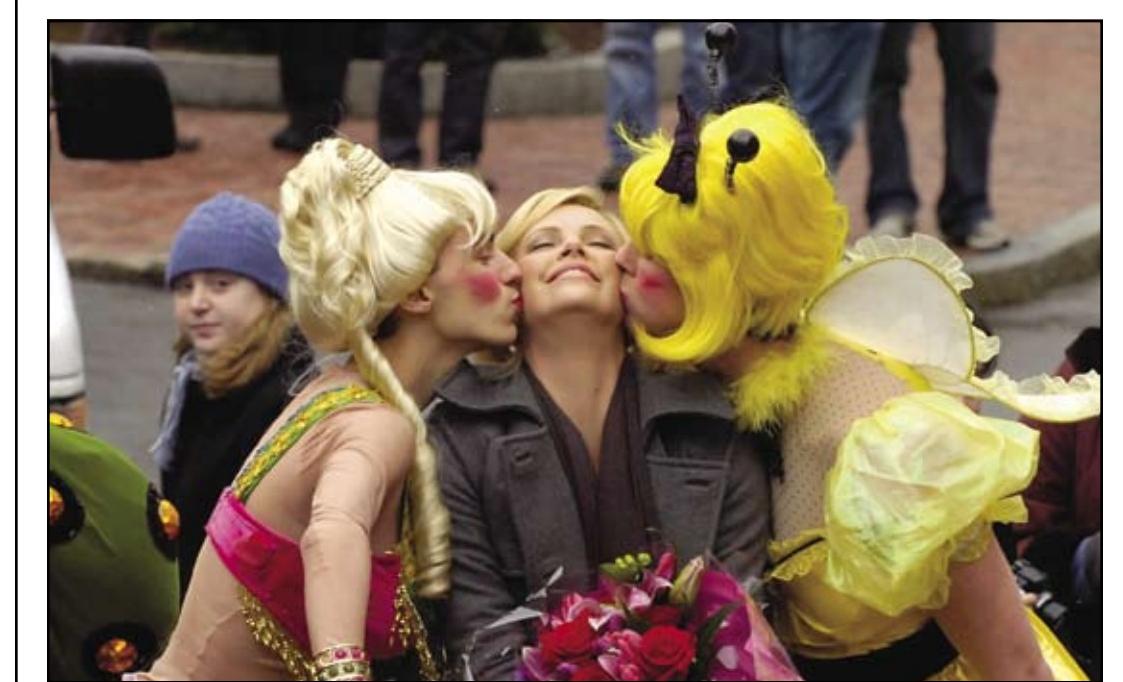
Comics

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NEWS

Researchers discover a solar system that resembles our own

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On Feb. 7, Charlize Theron received Hasty Pudding Theatricals' 2008 "Woman of the Year" Award at Harvard. She was accompanied in the parade by Hasty Pudding Theatricals' Vice President David Andersson, President Evan Eachus, and other members dressed in drag.

DAVID HE—THE TECH

MIT Discusses Community Impact At Cambridge Town Gown Meeting

By Emily Prentice
STAFF REPORTER

On Tuesday night, MIT met with the Cambridge Planning Board at the annual Town Gown meeting to report on its relationship with the Cambridge community, including the status of past and pending building projects. Lesley University, Harvard University, and Cambridge College also presented at the public meeting, which evaluates the institutions' impacts on the community.

The updates on the state of construction at MIT were provided by

Richard L. Amster, Jr., the director of Facilities Planning and Construction. MIT's major upcoming project is the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research. Amster said that MIT "plans to break ground next month." The site for the building is at the intersection of Main St. and Ames St., on part of the current location of the East parking lot.

New parking will be provided by the Sloan School expansion, where an underground parking lot will include 425 parking spaces. The Sloan School will also receive an addi-

tional 207,000 gross square feet for classrooms. The Sloan expansion is expected to be finished in 2010.

The report also included information about the construction of New Ashdown (NW35), the new graduate dormitory to be located at the corner of Pacific St. and Albany St. New Ashdown, which will include 550 beds, will be completed in time for the Fall 2008 semester.

The current Ashdown House, at 305 Memorial Dr., will be trans-

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Student Center Subway Responds To Complaints With Cameras, Name Tags

By Lulu Wang
STAFF REPORTER

The Subway located in the Student Center has recently made several changes to service following complaints from MIT students.

Employees now wear name tags, which allow customers to easily identify an individual in case of a dispute or other follow-up. A comment box has also been added so suggestions or complaints can be

brought directly to the attention of the manager. The owner's phone number and e-mail are posted on the counter to further encourage communication between the Subway and its customers.

Christopher K. Hoffman '08, Chairman of the Undergraduate Association Committee on Dining, recalled that the UA first drew attention to the complaints during the Senate retreat in mid-November of

2007. According to UA President Martin F. Holmes '08, the most common criticisms were directed toward slow service and food that was not prepared to satisfaction.

Hoffman said that both the owner and manager of Subway were responsive to complaints after being approached by Hoffman and Holmes and agreed to make a number

Subway, Page 14

Ex-Northern Illinois University Student Slays Five Students, Wounds 16 Others

By Monica Davey
and Susan Saulny
THE NEW YORK TIMES

DEKALB, ILL. — With minutes left in a class in ocean sciences at Northern Illinois University on Thursday afternoon, a tall skinny man dressed in black stepped out from behind a curtain on the stage of the lecture hall, said nothing, and opened fire with a shot-

gun, the authorities and witnesses said.

The man shot again and again, witnesses said, perhaps 20 times. Students in the large lecture hall, stunned, dropped to the floor.

Five people, all of them students, were killed, John G. Peters, the president of Northern Illinois University, said at a news conference on Thursday evening. Sixteen others were in-

jured. Hospital officials said several of the students had been shot in the head.

The gunman, whom the authorities did not immediately identify, also died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, Peters said, noting that the man's body was found on the stage of the lecture hall. Police from the

Shooting, Page 17

WORLD & NATION

U.S. Agrees to Produce Data On Iran's Nuclear Ambitions

By David E. Sanger
and Elaine Sciolino

THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Bush administration has agreed to turn over to international inspectors intelligence data it has collected that it says proves Iran worked on developing a nuclear weapon until a little more than four years ago, according to American and foreign diplomats.

The decision reverses the United States' longstanding refusal to share the data, citing the need to protect intelligence sources.

The administration acted as the International Atomic Energy Agency is scheduled to issue a report as early as next week on Iran's past nuclear activities. Administration officials hope that the nuclear inspectors can now confront Iran with what the Americans believe is the strongest evidence that the Iranians had a nuclear program.

The Bush administration's refusal to turn over the data has been a source of friction with Mohammed ElBaradei, the director general of the agency, who has argued that Iran must be given a fair chance to examine some of the case that Washington has developed.

House Votes to Issue Contempt Citations

By Philip Shenon

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The House voted Thursday to issue contempt citations against the White House chief of staff and a former White House counsel for refusing to cooperate in an investigation into the mass firings of federal prosecutors.

The vote to hold Joshua B. Bolten, the chief of staff, and Harriet E. Miers, the former counsel, in contempt of Congress followed bitter partisan wrangling on the House floor, including a Republican walkout from the chamber, and moved House Democrats closer to a constitutional showdown with President Bush.

The 223-32 vote to issue the contempt citations, the first approved by Congress against the executive branch since the Reagan administration, is likely to move the dispute to a federal courtroom, with House lawyers calling on a judge to enforce subpoenas against Bolten and Miers. The Senate is weighing similar contempt charges against Karl Rove, Bush's former political adviser.

Bolten and Miers were subpoenaed by the House Judiciary Committee for information about their part in the dismissal of several U.S. attorneys last year for what appear to have been political reasons.

U.N. to Help Organize Iraqi Elections Set for October

By Alissa J. Rubin

THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD

Iraq's parliament, faced with a stalemate in appointing election commissions in the most populous provinces and accusations of overt politicization of the election process, announced Thursday that it would welcome the United Nations to play a large role in organizing the vote.

Under a law approved by the parliament on Wednesday, provincial elections must be held by Oct. 1.

At a press conference, Staffan de Mistura, the special representative to the U.N. secretary-general, announced a tight schedule for helping set up provincial election commissions and a plan to monitor their work.

The responsibilities of provincial commissioners include selecting polling places, providing and collecting ballots and transferring them to counting stations.

The problem is that many of the nation's most powerful political parties have divided up most of the seats on the Independent High Election Commission, which oversees national election policy. That means there are few, if any, independent brokers overseeing the election process, according to Iraqi academics and lawmakers.

A Weather Machine

By Roberto Rondanelli
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

As computers and models become more sophisticated, weather forecasting is growing increasingly independent of humans. Even the text of this analysis could eventually be produced by a computer. What then is the contribution of humans in the process of weather forecasting? If the contribution is merely communicating the forecast, then meteorology as a physical science is only important in providing the tools to improve models. People are not usually interested in the physical consistency of their forecasts, rather, they are interested in the forecasts themselves and their accuracy. Once a model is capable of producing a forecast, the communication of the forecast to the public proceeds independently from the physical principles on which the forecast was based.

One can make a few points in favor of humans. A posteriori explanations of a weather event can usually be found, even when all model forecasts failed (yes, in this respect meteorology seems no different from economics). That means we retain at least the ability to explain mechanistically a weather event, even in the unfavorable case that no model gives the right answer. A stronger point in favor of humans is the fact that some humans consistently rank better than models in weather forecasting contests. For several years, these people have used models to help themselves achieve better accuracy, while obviously adding something else. Disentangling that 'something else' is what allows meteorologists to improve models and produce better forecasts. But only to make the whole process even more human-independent.

Extended Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy. Breezy. Low 28°F (-2°C) High 46°F (8°C).
Tonight: Partly cloudy to mostly clear. Much colder. Low 17°F (-8°C).
Tomorrow: Mostly sunny. Cold. High 26°F (-3°C).
Sunday: Partly cloudy to cloudy. Much warmer. Chance of rain. Low 18°F (-8°C) High 41°F (5°C).

Top Officials Make Bleaker Assessment of U.S. Economy

By Edmund L. Andrews

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

With the credit markets once again deteriorating, the nation's two top economic policymakers acknowledged Thursday that the outlook for the economy had worsened, as both came under criticism for being overtaken by events and failing to act boldly enough.

In testimony to Congress, Ben S. Bernanke, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, signaled that the Fed was ready to reduce interest rates yet again, pointing out that problems in housing and mortgage-related markets had spread more widely and proved more intractable than he predicted three months ago.

His sobering assessment was echoed by Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson Jr., who appeared with him. Both continued to avoid predicting a recession but said they were scaling back the more optimistic forecasts they had issued in November.

Ethan S. Harris, chief U.S. economist for Lehman Brothers, said that both policymakers had "come clean" about the economy's problems but that investors were not impressed.

Stock prices, which normally rally when the Fed hints it will lower borrowing costs, tumbled instead. The Dow Jones industrial average dropped 175 points, or 1.4 percent; broader stock indexes dropped by similar amounts.

Anxiety is escalating among institutional lenders and major borrowers, as the panic over soaring default rates on subprime mortgages that began last summer continues to spread, freezing up credit for municipalities, hospitals, student loans and even investment funds holding the most conservative bonds.

On Capitol Hill, the economic policymakers found themselves in the line of fire. Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., accused both Bernanke and Paulson of having "hit the snooze button."

Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., chairman of the Banking Committee, told reporters after the hearing that "it just seems as if they aren't as concerned about the magnitude of the problem."

Testifying before the committee, Bernanke said he still expected the economy to grow at a "sluggish" pace over the next few months and to pick

up speed later in the year. But, he said, "the downside risks to growth have increased," noting that spiraling losses in home mortgages have dragged down the credit markets and shaken the broader economy.

While trying to be optimistic, Paulson said that the administration's forecast "would be less, but I do believe we'll keep growing."

Many Wall Street economic forecasters, however, are already estimating that the risks of a recession are at least 50-50, and a growing number of analysts contend that an economic contraction may have already begun.

Fed policymakers will release their newest forecasts next Wednesday, and Bernanke said they would be more in line with those of private-sector economists.

The Fed has reduced its benchmark interest rate, called the federal funds rate, five times since September, including two cuts within eight days last month. The rate has fallen to 3 percent; as recently as late summer of last year it had been 5.25 percent.

Bernanke assured lawmakers that the Fed would "provide adequate insurance" against a downturn in the form of cheaper money.

Black Leader Pulls His Support From Clinton, Shifts to Obama

By Jeff Zeleny
and Patrick Healy

THE NEW YORK TIMES

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

Rep. John Lewis, an elder statesman from the civil rights era and one of Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's most prominent black supporters, said on Thursday night that he planned to cast his vote as a superdelegate for Sen. Barack Obama in hopes of preventing a fight at the Democratic convention.

"In recent days, there is a sense of movement and a sense of spirit," said Lewis, a Georgia Democrat who endorsed Clinton last fall. "Something is happening in America and people are prepared and ready to make that great leap."

Lewis, who carries great influence among other members of Congress, disclosed his decision in an interview as the Service Employ-

ees International Union was on the brink of endorsing Obama.

His comments came as fresh signs emerged that Clinton's support was beginning to erode from some other African-American lawmakers who also serve as superdelegates. Rep. David Scott of Georgia, who was among the first to defect, said he would not go against the will of voters in his district, who overwhelmingly supported Obama last week.

The developments came on a day in which Clinton set out anew to prove that the fight for the Democratic nomination was far from over. Campaigning in Ohio, she pursued a new strategy of biting attack lines against Obama, while adopting a newly populist tone as she courted blue-collar voters.

Clinton also intensified her efforts in Wisconsin, which holds its

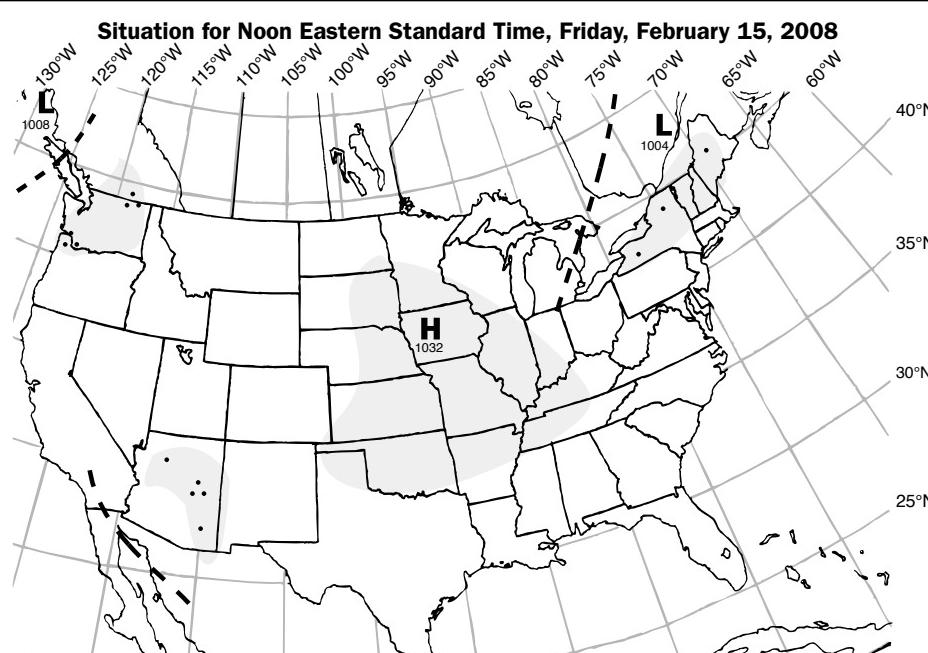
primary on Tuesday and where she and Obama now have the first dueling negative television advertisements of the campaign.

In the ads, Clinton taunted Obama for refusing to debate her in Wisconsin. And she and former President Bill Clinton prepared for a new fund-raising blitz to try to counter Obama's edge of several million dollars in campaign cash.

Yet even as the Democratic rivals looked ahead to the primaries in Wisconsin, Ohio and Texas, Lewis said he and other prominent African American party leaders had been moved by Obama's recent victories and his ability to transcend racial and geographic lines.

Though Lewis had praise for Clinton and for her historic candidacy, he said he would decide within days whether to formally endorse Obama.

WEATHER



Weather Systems	
H	High Pressure
L	Low Pressure
S	Hurricane

Weather Fronts	
- - -	Trough
● ● ●	Warm Front
▲ ▲ ▲	Cold Front
△ △ △	Stationary Front

Precipitation Symbols	
Snow	Rain
*	▽
▽	•
Light	*
Moderate	•
Heavy	··

Other Symbols	
≡	Fog
R	Thunderstorm
∞	Haze

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and *The Tech*

Kenyans Split on Ethnic Lines Even Though Violence Declining

By Jeffrey Gettleman

THE NEW YORK TIMES

OTHAYA, KENYA

Sarah Wangoi has spent her entire life — all 70 years of it — in the Rift Valley. But last month, she was chased off her farm by a mob that called her a foreigner. She now sleeps on the cold floor of a stranger's house, seeking refuge in an area of Kenya where her ethnic group, the Kikuyu, is strong. It is, supposedly, her homeland.

"I am safe now," said Wangoi, though the mob still chases her in her dreams.

Across the country, William Ojiambo sat in a field where the ground was too hard to plow. He, too, sought refuge with his ethnic group, the Luo. He used to live in an ethnically mixed town called Nakuru but was recently evicted by a gang from another ethnic group that burned everything he owned.

"We came here with nothing, like cabbages thrown in the back of a truck," Ojiambo said.

Kenya used to be considered one of the most promising countries in Africa. Now it is in the throes of

ethnically segregating itself. Ever since a deeply flawed election in December kicked off a wave of ethnic and political violence, hundreds of thousands of people have been violently driven from their homes and many are now resettling in ethnically homogenous zones.

Luos have gone back to Luo land, Kikuyus to Kikuyu land, Kambas to Kamba land and Kisii to Kisii land. Even some of the packed slums in the capital, Nairobi, have split along ethnic lines. The bloodletting across the country that has killed more than 1,000 people since the election seems to have subsided in the past week. But the trucks piled high with mattresses, furniture, blankets and children keep chugging across the countryside, an endless convoy of frightened people who, in their desperation, are redrawing the map of Kenya.

The United Nations and Western powers are pushing for a political compromise, and President Bush said he would send Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice here to "deliver a message" to Kenya's leaders.

On Thursday, officials here said that Kenyan government and opposition leaders had agreed in principle to join together in a coalition government but that they remained bitterly divided over the specifics, especially how much power the opposition would have. Two officials close to the negotiations said the government had rejected the opposition's offer to split power between the president, who would remain head of state and the military's commander in chief, and a newly created prime minister position.

Whatever deal is struck will have to address the growing de facto segregation, since a resettlement of the country may further entrench the political and ethnic divisions that have recently erupted. Shattered trust is much harder to rebuild than smashed huts, and many people say they will never go back to where they once lived.

"How can we, when it was our friends who did this to us?" said Joseph Ndungu, a shopkeeper in the Rift Valley, who said that men he used to play soccer with burned down his shop.

Faulty Satellite Will Be Target In Shoot-Down by the U.S. Military

By Thom Shanker

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The military will try to shoot down a crippled spy satellite in the next two weeks, senior officials said Thursday. The officials laid out a high-tech plan to intercept the satellite over the Pacific just before it tumbles uncontrollably to earth carrying toxic fuel.

President Bush ordered the action to prevent any possible contamination from the hazardous rocket fuel on board, and not out of any concern that parts of the spacecraft might survive and reveal its secrets, the officials said.

The challenging mission to demolish the satellite on the fringes of space will rely on an unforeseen use of ship-based weapons developed to defend against ballistic missile attacks.

The effort will be a real-world test of the nation's anti-ballistic missile systems and its anti-satellite abilities, even though the Pentagon said it was not using the effort to test its most exotic weapons or send a message to any adversaries.

The ramifications of the operation are diplomatic, as well as military and scientific, in part because the United States criticized China last year when Beijing tested an anti-satellite system with an old weather satellite as a target.

The three-ship convoy assigned to the new task will stalk the satellite's orbital path across the northern Pacific, tracking the satellite as it circles the globe 16 times a day. The sensors and weapons in the operation, modified from anti-aircraft defenses for use as a shield against incoming missiles and installed on Navy cruisers, have been used just in carefully controlled tests.

This time, the target is not an incoming warhead or a dummy test target, but a doomed experimental satellite the size of a school bus and weighing 5,000 pounds. It died shortly after being launched in December 2006 and contains a half ton of hydrazine, a fuel that officials said could burn the lungs and even be deadly in extended doses.

The tank is believed to be sturdy enough to survive re-entry, based on studies of the tank that fell to earth

after the Columbia shuttle disaster in 2003.

The military and NASA have calculated that the best opportunity to shoot down the satellite with an interceptor missile is just before it re-enters the atmosphere and starts to tumble and break apart on a random path, an opportunity that begins in three to four days and continues for eight days. At that point, the debris would be quickly dragged out of orbit.

In many ways, the task resembles shooting down an intercontinental nuclear missile, although this target is larger, its path is better known and, if a first shot misses, it will continue to circle the earth for long enough to allow a second or even a third try.

The weapon of choice, after modifications that are way, is the Standard Missile 3 on by Aegis cruisers. The missiles and supporting radar were being modified and tested to shoot down enemy warheads. So the software is being reprogrammed to home in on the radar and other signatures of a large satellite instead of a ballistic missile, officials said.

Hezbollah Threatens New Attacks On Israeli Targets After Leader's Death

By Robert F. Worth
and Nada Bakri

THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEIRUT, LEBANON

Accusing Israel of killing one of his top commanders, Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, threatened Thursday to intensify his group's conflict with Israel and to retaliate against Israeli targets anywhere in the world.

Nasrallah, who has been in hiding since 2006 because of Israeli assassination threats, spoke to thousands of mourners via a televised image at an emotional funeral for the slain commander, Imad Mugniyah. He was killed in a car bombing on Tuesday night in Damascus, Syria.

"You crossed the borders," Nasrallah said. "Zionists, if you want an open war, let it be an open war anywhere."

Israel, which has denied involvement in the killing, ordered its military and embassies around the world to heighten security. No one has claimed responsibility for killing Mugniyah, a famously elusive militant suspected of planning bombings

that killed hundreds of Americans in Lebanon during the 1980s.

Nasrallah's speech — his most belligerent in many months — coincided with another vast public gathering across town, in which Hezbollah's Western-allied political adversaries commemorated the third anniversary of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri's killing in a huge car bombing.

Together, the two gatherings vividly illustrated the bitter political divisions that have crippled Lebanon's government over the past year and pulled it perilously close to open civil conflict.

In his speech, Nasrallah called the killing of Mugniyah a "big mistake" that would be avenged. "The blood of Imad Mugniyah will eliminate them," he said, referring to the Israelis.

If Hezbollah were to strike at Israel outside the borders of the two countries, it would be a sharp departure from the group's current policy. The last time it did so was in the mid-1990s, when Mugniyah was accused of planning bombings of Israeli targets in Argentina.

Such attacks are not seen as likely. Hezbollah's patrons, Syria and Iran, "are pursuing strategies of their own, and Hezbollah is not really free to depart from those," said Paul Salem, director of the Carnegie Endowment Middle East Center in Beirut.

Iran's close ties with Hezbollah — and with Mugniyah — were underscored Thursday when Iran's foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, spoke at the funeral, reading a letter from President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"These are operations that will shorten their corrupt and filthy life," Mottaki said, quoting the letter, which was referring to the Israelis and the killing of Mugniyah. "Their smiles will not last long. The free people and the Lebanese people have lost one hero but there are a million more Hajj Rudwans ready to join the ranks of the resistance." Mugniyah also went by the name Hajj Rudwan.

Outside the funeral hall, a cold, steady rain fell as thousands of mourners packed the streets, where uniformed Hezbollah militants and the group's youth brigade marched to martial music.

Turmoil in Africa Alters Focus Of Bush's 5-Nation Tour

By Sheryl Gay Stolberg

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

On the eve of a planned trip to Africa, President Bush thrust himself into the role of peacemaker on Thursday, as his plans to promote American efforts against poverty and disease gave way to a more pressing imperative: addressing the violence and turmoil on the continent.

Bush injected his administration directly into the political crisis in Kenya, calling for a "full return to democracy" and announcing that he would send Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice there to "deliver a message directly to Kenya's leaders." Rice will not have far to go; she and the president will be right next door, in Tanzania.

The six-day, five-country Africa tour would be one of a string of foreign trips, to Eastern Europe, Israel, Japan and China, that will keep Bush busy overseas in the twilight of his administration, as his influence over domestic policy wanes and attention at home turns increasingly to the campaign to elect his successor.

Bush is scheduled to leave for Africa Friday night. The trip will take him to Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia — all countries that have benefited from American foreign aid.

Bush's presence is intended to celebrate each country's political and economic progress, while sending a not-so-subtle reminder of the role the United States has played.

But with Kenya racked by violence over a disputed election, unrest in Chad and a worsening crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan, it had become increasingly clear that Bush could not take what analysts have dubbed "a victory lap" in Africa while steering clear of troubles on the continent — especially in Kenya, where more than 1,000 have died in the recent violence.

House Fails to Renew Surveillance Bill

By Carl Hulse

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The House broke for a week's recess Thursday without renewing terrorist surveillance authority demanded by President Bush, leading him to warn of risky intelligence gaps while Democrats accused him of reckless fearmongering.

The refusal of Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., to schedule a vote on a surveillance measure approved by the Senate on Tuesday touched off an intense partisan conflict over the national security questions that have colored federal elections since 2002 and are likely to play a significant role again in November.

Trying to put pressure on Democrats, Bush offered to delay a trip to Africa to resolve the dispute and warned that failure to extend the expanded power under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which expires Saturday, could hamper efforts to track terrorists.

"Our intelligence professionals are working day and night to keep us safe, and they're waiting to see whether Congress will give them the tools they need to succeed or tie their hands by failing to act," Bush said.

But Pelosi and House Democrats said that it was Bush and congressional Republicans who were at fault because they had resisted temporarily extending the bill to allow disagreements to be worked out. She said Democrats would not be bullied into approving a measure they consider flawed.

Near End of 8-Year Presidency, Putin Speaks of Future

By C.J. Chivers

THE NEW YORK TIMES

MOSCOW

President Vladimir V. Putin, in the final weeks of an eight-year administration that secured his place as the country's most popular politician, said Thursday that he intended to wield substantial and long-running power in the Kremlin after leaving office next month and becoming Russia's prime minister.

In a confident and forceful public performance in which he described many of Russia's continuing policy choices, Putin spoke bitingly of his international critics and defied intensive criticism from Washington by refusing to back down from threats to aim strategic missiles at the Czech Republic, Poland and Ukraine.

He said the Kremlin had been forced to assume a reinvigorated nuclear defense by NATO's courting of Ukraine and by the United States' development of a missile defense system for deployment in Europe.

"We will have to retarget our missiles on the objects that we think threaten our national security," he said. "I have to speak about this directly and honestly, so that there would be no attempts to shift the responsibility for such developments on those who should not be blamed."

Large Union Backs Obama; Another Likely to Follow

By Steven Greenhouse

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Giving Sen. Barack Obama new momentum, one of the nation's largest labor unions, the United Food and Commercial Workers, endorsed him on Thursday. Another giant, the Service Employees International Union, was on the brink of backing him.

The endorsement of the service employees, which with 1.9 million members is seen as the nation's most politically potent union, would be considered a special boon. Members of the service employees' board were casting votes by e-mail and fax on Thursday night, and two top union leaders said an Obama endorsement was likely.

The two unions did not make endorsements until now largely because they were so torn among Obama, John Edwards and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. But with Edwards out and Obama winning eight straight contests, many of the top leaders of the unions decided it was time to back him.

"Both candidates are good on worker issues, but there is something about Sen. Obama that has mobilized our leadership and mobilized our membership," said Joseph Hansen, president of the food and commercial workers, which represents 1.1 million workers in the United States. "Forty percent of our members are less than 30 years old, and a lot of them like Obama."

OPINION



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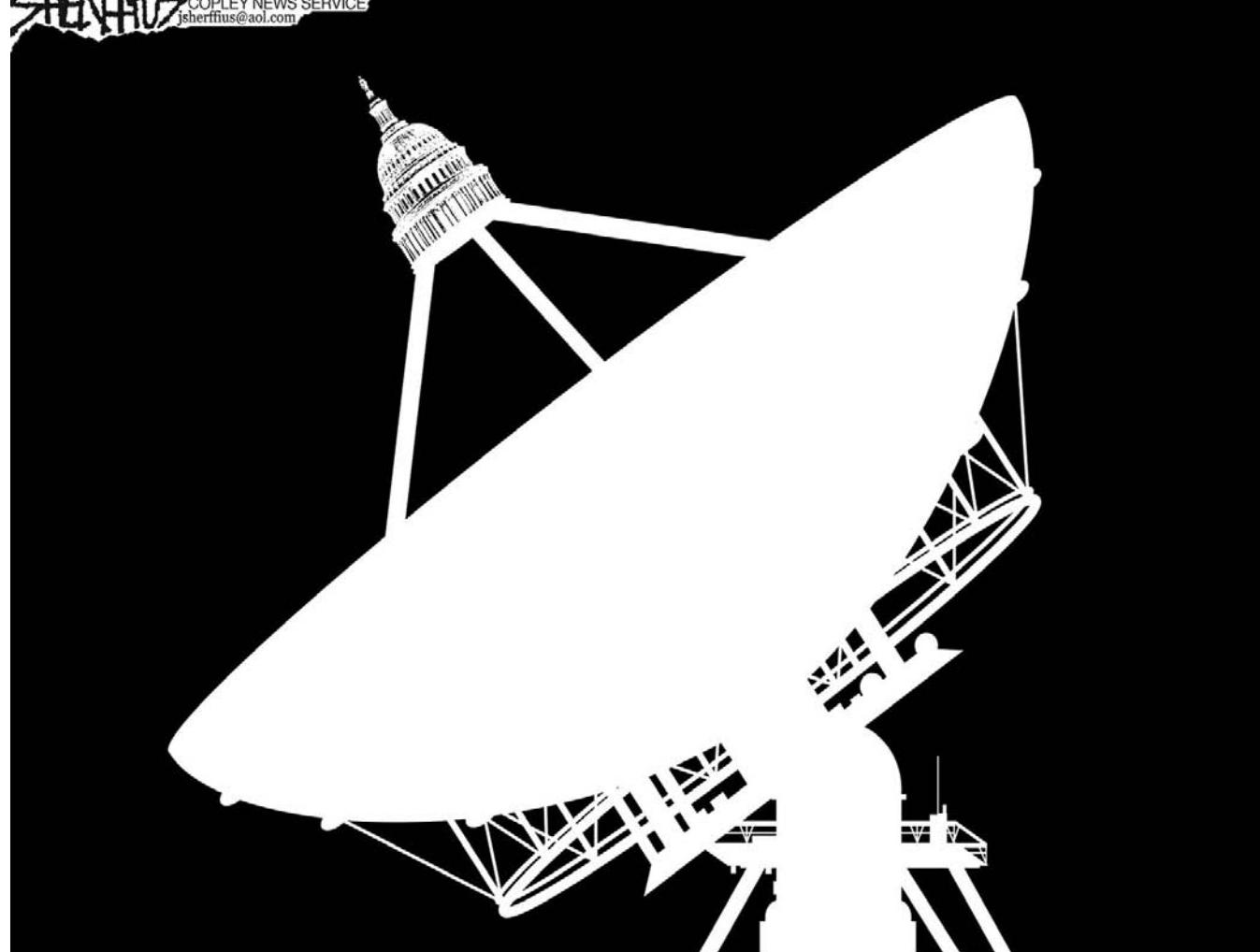
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IT'S FRIDAY

Brought to you by CAMPUS LIFE

Manisha Padi and Ying Yang

It's Valentine's Day! People are in love, chocolate boxes line the streets, and all you see is pink and red (not that we're complaining). Yet, it isn't all fun and games. For many of us not so caught up in the rush, this is a dreaded time filled with forced reflection on both single-hood and the dreary rut of longtime couple-dom. So how can we here at Figuring out Fashion be of any help? Well, there's really only one way to cure the V-day blues — a makeover! After doing some exploring, we came up with an affordable plan to reinvent your look and spirit this weekend.

The first thing to tackle is the task of getting newer, better, and cuter clothes. We found one thing we liked right away — sales! This is the best time for prices on winter clothes, and since it's still freezing outside, why not take advantage of it? Spring is closing in on us too, so remember to stock up on discounted winter short sleeves that went unsold during the season. Try the Cambridge Galleria, the Prudential Center, Downtown Crossing, and Newbury Street for some splurging. And please don't claim that shopping is a waste of time: it's totally multitasking (shopping burns 160 calories per hour for a 150 pound person and even more if you try on clothes). Go ahead and choose whatever stores suit your price range and personal style, but those looking to revitalize their wardrobe need to branch out. Hangers do no good for clothes, and sometimes a piece that looks awful on the rack will look great when you try it on. Since trying on clothes is free, go ahead and explore as many looks as you can.

For accessories, girls should head to So Good jewelry. The selection is endless and prices are very reasonable. Cute purses and accessories such as clutches, belts, long necklaces, and earrings can be found at Aldo Accessories and Wet Seal. If you have some patience, try digging through accessory racks at Filene's Basement and Marshalls because there are definitely many high-end brand bargains for both guys and girls. Another place that sells everything cute for low prices is of course Target, and access is surprisingly easy. Take the red line to the Andrew T stop and walk over the bridge

Figuring out Fashion

A Valentine's Day New Look!

or take the available shuttle.

Now that you got your physical appearance taken care of, you need to worry about your health and wellness. What's the point of having new clothes if you don't have the confidence and glowing features to pull them off? Look in coupon books for massages, salon treatments, haircuts, and nail care. Go out to the spa and treat yourself! Both guys and girls should definitely venture out to Sephora, where we got our makeup done by the attendants and sprayed ourselves with perfume and cologne. Don't forget to exercise too; There are free regular swimming and PE classes, as well as the rest of the Z-Center for you to use.

Once you have a new outfit and have taken care of yourself, it's time to go out and have some fun. Check your coupon books for discounts at nice restaurants and then head to Ryles for jazz and salsa (18 and 19+ depending on the night). Going to a museum, like the Boston Museum of Science or the Museum of Fine Arts (which are both free) is also something fun to do. A classic outing can be to the movies, a concert, a sports game, or even bowling. Let's face it; if you're like us, anything is more exciting than the usual Friday night of a movie and maybe some Guitar Hero (if you're lucky). You can always meet a potential boyfriend/girlfriend while you are out having fun, but if you coop yourself up in your room, you'll never have a chance to meet that special someone.

We hope this gives you all the tools and inspiration you need to get out there and make a change for the better — it sure helped us!

Suggestions or comments about fashion at MIT? E-mail fashion@tech.mit.edu.

Ask A TA

Dear TAs,

I just don't get it. We started this really cool advice column, but no one wants to write in! Are we trying too hard to be cool? Would we be cooler if we weren't trying so hard? Is being cool some sort of paradox? Help!

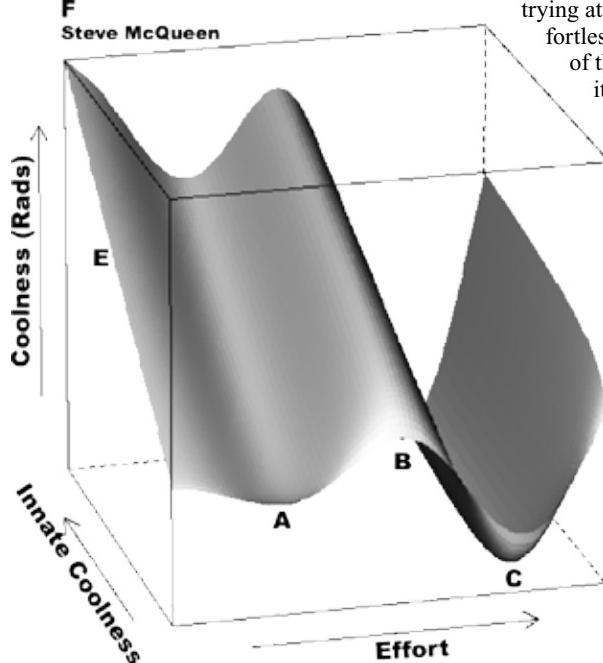
Askata@tech.mit.edu

Dear Ask A TA,

You're confused here and rightfully so. See, when people talk about being so cool it seems effortless, they're referring to an illusion. It's not about trying to be cool — it's about trying to seem like you're not trying. Did that make sense? No? Here, let me formulate coolness.

Coolness is essentially a function of two parameters: amount of trying (effort) and badass-ness (innate coolness). A person's coolness, defined here in units of Rads, can be defined as a function of trying and badass-ness. For every person, badass-ness is a constant, usually defined from 1-10 (you know, www.hotornot.com scale). It's something you can't change, so accept it. As a point of reference, Steve McQueen (translation for undergrads: Zac Efron) is a 10, Dean Martin (Hillary Duff) is an 8, and Tom Selleck with a moustache (Hannah Montana) is a solid 9.

Steve McQueen

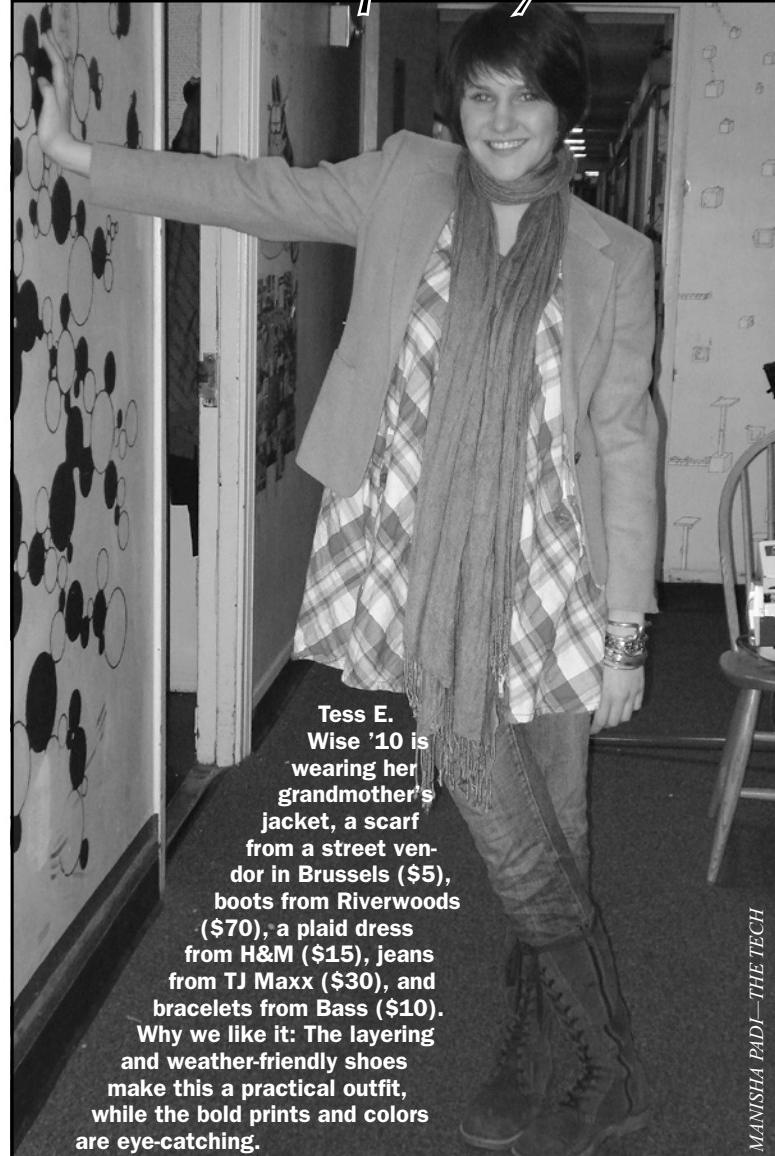


Happy Trying,
—TA Charles Lin G

Seriously people. Write in with your questions to AskATA@tech.mit.edu. You don't want grad students giving themselves advice for another week.

The Tech, February 15, 2008, Page 5

Campus Style Watch



Tess E. Wise '10 is wearing her grandmother's jacket, a scarf from a street vendor in Brussels (\$5), boots from Riverwoods (\$70), a plaid dress from H&M (\$15), jeans from TJ Maxx (\$30), and bracelets from Bass (\$10). Why we like it: The layering and weather-friendly shoes make this a practical outfit, while the bold prints and colors are eye-catching.

MANISHA PADI—THE TECH

Quotes from the Facebook Group: Overheard At MIT

"She wants to spend money on me. I mean, it's not that she's senile ..." —Unknown

"Who gives a \$#!+ as long as they see my electron diagram!" —Unknown

To submit quotes, join the Facebook group! Special thanks to group creator Kristin M. Rose '10.

WMBR Top 5 Songs to Robot Dance to

1. Take It Like A Man, "Dragonette (Felix Cartal remix)"
2. Erole Attack, "Boys Noize"
3. Daft Punk, "Around The World"
4. À Cause des Garçons, "Yelle (Tepr Remix)"
5. Justice, "D.A.N.C.E."

The French kids are dominating the scene!

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Show Style: live mixed bangin' electro

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ARTS

CONCERT REVIEW

The Chan Marshall Musical Revue

Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Moonwalk

By Sarah Dupuis

ARTS EDITOR

Cat Power
The Orpheum
Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008

Earlier tonight, seated at The Orpheum, I couldn't help but think of an old Toothpaste for Dinner comic. This particular installment of the Web series featured the author sitting at a desk writing a letter, which read: "Dear Chan Marshall of Cat Power, SHUT UP. Love, Drew."

Well, I wasn't even close to telling her to be quiet. Her sound was spot on all evening, and the spooky tumbleweed drag of her Dirty Delta Blues band reassembled even her most melancholy originals so that they went straight along with the bluesy numbers off her new covers record, Jukebox. The music was great, no problems there, other than slight disappointment about choice of material (c'mon, just play "He War"!). My complaint letter, unlike Drew's, might read something like this:

"Dear Chan Marshall of Cat Power, STAND

STILL. Love, Sarah."

I'm seriously feeling nostalgic for Cat Power shows I never went to. Like the one where she moaned the audience. Or when she used to be too shy to finish sets, and then cussed out the audience? At the very least, I know she used to play instruments.

But the Cat Power of today is a totally different animal (ha, ha) than that of ... well, pre-The Greatest, her seventh album. It's a change you can spot in her physical appearance, which is now sleek and svelte as her namesake mammal, and a change you can hear in her repertoire, which has become increasingly blues and ballad driven.

Objectively putting my own loud-guitar preferences aside, these changes are generally positive, because they mean Marshall is healthy, calm and in a place where she can create and tour without relying on alcohol, et

cetera, to keep her going. She was polite to the audience, kept her composure throughout the tight set, and her husky voice sang beautifully throughout uniform but appropriate covers ranging from Bob Dylan to James Brown.

Before Marshall herself sauntered onto stage, Dirty Delta Blues was playing a sparsely arranged slow desert swagger; two piano chords, a simple bass line, guitar harmonics, and brushed drums led into Billie Holiday cover "Don't Explain." Marshall entered snapping her fingers, hair neatly pulled back into a ponytail. She was all dressed up in a black button up, a throw-over vest, black fingerless motorcycle gloves, white shoes and skin-tight black jeans, which she pulled up continuously throughout the night. It was the only sign of human imperfection in a far-too-flawless chanteuse.

When she sang, "hush now, don't explain,"

the band really did hush. She strutted around the stage, which she commanded without a hint of admitted shyness. She seemed to channel the King of Pop; gloves on hand, she practically moonwalked across the stage on more than one occasion. She knew all the moves. She swiveled her heels, hopped from the hips, and interpretively moved her arms in some pseudo-sign language along with the lyrics. This dancing went on for the entire show, and it was driving me crazy. Some of the crowd — at Marshall's instructions — stood up and lit their lighters. What is this? Are people fully buying this? Where are the mood swings? Why is she so smiley and friendly? Who are you, Cat Power?

And then, the thought: maybe this stage personality, this sideways dancer, is really just as nervous as Cat Power-on-the-verge-of-a-nervous-breakdown minus the Jack Daniel's and Xanax. Maybe her too cool exterior covers up for someone who still feels the heartbreak she sings about and she's channeling all the performance anxiety into physical motion. Well, if I tell myself it's organic, I guess I can deal. Dance on, Chan, dance on.

MOVIE REVIEW ★★★★

Something New in Romanian Film

Much More Than an Abortion Movie

By Praveen Rathinavelu

ARTS EDITOR

4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days
Written and Directed by Cristian Mungiu
Starring Anamaria Marinca and Laura Vasiliu
Not Rated
Now Playing in Limited Release

These days, even when its subject is abortion, it's hard for a film to be genuinely affecting, or even feel new. But Cristian Mungiu's astonishing "4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days" insists on confronting abortion with a kind of honesty and force that will leave even the most hardened viewer a little dazed. And yet it would be too easy, and unfair, to label 4 months as simply an "abortion movie"; it would have been easy (and probably even successful) for Mungiu to construct the kind of gritty, mildly simplistic abortion movie most of us expect. But 4 months extends itself beyond any of these expectations and attempts something much more ambitious: to represent a harrowing day in the life of a Romanian college student in a way shatters the separation between film and viewer, and provides us with life, in its truest sense. It succeeds and it feels very, very new.

The film takes place in a single day; it traces the terrifying journey of Otilia (Anamaria Marinca) as she assists her roommate and friend, Gabita (Laura Vasiliu), in procuring an abortion during Ceausescu's communist Romania in the late 1980s, when such procedures were illegal. From the beginning, the camera and Otilia feel inseparable, and Otilia becomes a sort of universal guide in the film. She leads the terrifyingly inept Gabita through the entire procedure and shoulders the burden of the ordeal to a horrifying extent. In the same way, Otilia is our guide and our conscience as the film ventures through the dark, unsettling alleys, seedy hotels, and vivid households of Ceausescu's Romania, full of paranoia and uneasiness, but more prominently, life. By the end of the film, with Otilia at our side, we have been presented with the limits of both cruelty and friendship, and have explored a society at its truest pitch.

The most unexpected thing about the film is that, despite a modest budget at his disposal,

Mungiu demonstrates a rare aesthetic brilliance. Mungiu employs long, sustained shots that encompass as much detail as they possibly can, as well as a kind of camerawork that pops with vitality. "4 Months" can often be aesthetically overwhelming and is able to create scenes that ingrain themselves into our memory through the unspoken emotion of the camera. It is hard to forget Otilia stumbling through the Romanian streets, engulfed in almost total darkness and with no companion but the quivering camera. Mungiu is often meticulous in the composition of his scenes: a shot of dinner party is arranged like a painting and its depiction of Otilia enveloped by other dinner guests is witty, claustrophobic, and powerful.

The performances in "4 Months" are so globally subtle and believable that it almost goes without notice. Every character, no matter how frustrating or unlikable — and the abortion specialist is pretty monstrous — avoids caricature. If Mungiu's goal is to create a broad portrait of Romanian life, it is these performances that make it work so fundamentally. And, of course, Marinca and Vasiliu are fantastic as the film's core and its driving force. Their friendship is often strained enough to make you cringe, but the actresses complement each other beautifully, and their interactions are some of the best parts of the film.

During the closing scene of the film, a Romanian wedding reception takes place in the background. The scene is modest: through the window there is a shabby hotel reception hall filled with unknown guests dancing as Romanian music quietly drones on. It's a detail that has no real relation to the action in the forefront of the scene, but it's also one that, more than anything, is indicative of how much of Mungiu's heart and camera is devoted to the practices and nuances of Romanian life. So much of the details that compose the film feel so natural and understated that, after leaving the theater, I wondered aloud to a friend whether every little detail in the film could be constructed, or whether many just ... sort of ... happened. Before he replied, I decided the answer hardly mattered; they exist in a film as real as anything I can compare it to. "4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days" is a movie I find myself unable to question.

MOVIE REVIEW ★

Stupid Premise and Bad Writing

You Have Better Things To Do Than Visit 'Blue State'

By Alice Macdonald

STAFF WRITER

Blue State
Written and Directed by Marshall Lewy
Starring Breckin Meyer and Anna Paquin
DVD Released Feb. 12

Marshall Lewy's "Blue State" is a romantic comedy that misses the mark completely. It is neither romantic nor funny and features a horrible premise. Here are some of the film's major flaws:

Problem 1: Clichéd and contrived premise.

Breckin Meyer plays John, a democrat blogger who decides to move to Canada after George W. Bush is re-elected in 2004. For no apparent reason, he needs to find someone to drive there with him.

In the altered world he inhabits, he puts up flyers, which people actually respond to and he interviews candidates for his road trip. It is weird and stupid. Even more improbable is that a hot chick, Paquin's character Chloe, responds to the ad and they instantly depart for the border. Hmmm ... I wonder if they end up together? This is not a tough question for anyone who has ever seen a movie before. If you haven't seen a movie before, don't start with this one. The plot clichés continue as the first stop on the road trip is an unexpected visit to John's parents. It is no surprise that John (like every character ever) has problems with his father. I suppose writer Marshall Lewy giggled at the silliness of John bringing a girl with blue hair and leather jacket home to his conservative mom and dad ... but no one else will.

Problem 2: Problematic politics.

Trying to make a movie about some event such as the 2004 election poses a problem because by the time the movie is made, a lot of other things have happened and no one really cares anymore. Writer Lewy channels his opinions through John, but the problem is that he doesn't have anything interesting to say. He touches on broad topics — the same thing that

everyone says about president Bush. I don't need to sit through a romantic comedy to figure out that the war in Iraq was a mistake and that Bush sucks at public speaking. The inclusion of Lewy's whiny political opinions does nothing for this film whatsoever. I guess it is just necessary to fuel the pointless plot.

Problem 3: Writing.

Watching "Blue State," I wondered whether this was a film student's final project. The writing is juvenile and awkward. Chloe actually says, "It seems to me that you're running away." All the characters are closer to caricatures than believable and interesting beings. The dialogue is simply void of the kind of subtlety required to make an interesting and affecting film. Plot twists are also introduced for no reason. For example, John has a brother who is serving in Iraq ... no wait, he is dead. If only anyone gave a damn.

Problem 4: Acting and poor chemistry.

I suppose "Blue State" could have been decent if the two main characters had been more complex and believable. Unfortunately, the two leads give less than inspired performances and lack a considerable amount of chemistry. When they finally kiss, it is really icky. Think about your parents — no, your grandparents — having sex. This is a little bit like the feeling induced by watching Meyer and Paquin get it on. The problem could be that Paquin looks so much younger than Meyer that it seems like an inappropriate professor/student romance and Paquin isn't even getting an A out of sleeping with this creep.

To cap it off, "Blue State" is visually conventional and uninteresting. The narrative is accompanied by an aesthetic that is very flat and does nothing to perk up the emotionally dead movie.

Now that I have outlined everything I didn't like about the film, I should say that it is not as though "Blue State" is the worst movie I have ever seen, or even the worst movie I have seen this year. But there are just so many better movies to see that I feel compelled to dissuade anyone from wasting their time with this crap.

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PERSEPOLIS

A FILM BY MARJANE SATRAPI AND VINCENT PARONNAUD

PG-13

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BOOK REVIEW

The Error of Our Ways

'Predictably Irrational' Highlights Oddities of Human Decision Making

By Rosa Cao

STAFF WRITER

Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions

By Dan Ariely

Published by HarperCollins

Available Feb. 19

www.predictablyirrational.com

Does anyone believe that humans are rational? Or are we nothing more than victims of our impulses and emotions, careening randomly from one bad decision to the next like a drunken rodent? In a loosely strung collection of simple experiments, Sloan Professor Dan Ariely argues in "Predictably Irrational" that we behave in ways that fall short of rational, but are highly systematic.

In arena after arena, Ariely cites studies that show that our ability to optimize is far from optimal, and that simply possessing intelligence, good intentions, and moral standards are no match in the lurch for our irrational selves. But all is not lost; with the enthusiasm of a true self-help writer, Ariely exhorts us to take account of our natural propensities and biases in order to make better decisions as individuals, and build better structures as a society.

There is an excellent chapter on social versus market mindsets and transactions, and the different value sets that prevail. For example, it seems that people are willing to work for free (as a social transaction) and when paid (a fair price), but hardly at all for something in between (an unfair price). Such findings seem especially relevant in an environment like MIT's where the boundaries between home and school, professional and social relationships, work and play are vitally blurred. Further, Ariely makes a convincing argument for how this plays out

in the rest of the world, when businesses spend money to promote an image of themselves as friends, partners, helpers, but then lose those social gains when they fail to hold up the other end of the social contract (reciprocity, health care, flexibility).

Another section explores the idea of foolish consistencies, insightfully presenting habits as a kind of intrapersonal herd behavior, where each person can be seen as a collection of selves, each one at a different point in time, looking back at the previous ones for cues on what to do.

Given that many of the experiments took place at MIT, it's also fun to think that some of us may have contributed as guinea pigs (or at least walked by) as the findings coalesced. For example, do people prefer a Hershey's Kiss, or a Lindt truffle discounted by the price of a Kiss? Locations also star in the book,

from Walker to W20 to East Campus, which is graced with the parenthetical "and believe me — it takes a serious misfit to be a misfit at MIT." (See page 141 for the full description.)

Perhaps the greatest disappointment is that much of what is offered up in this new book is not exactly news. Versions of many of these experiments lead a fulfilling life in elementary psychology textbooks, while more specific findings have been covered in the popular press. And in the 30 years since Kahneman and Tversky's Nobel-prize winning work on human decision-making, do even economists truly believe that humans behave optimally all the time?

Ariely assumes a straw man when he writes

"I have described experiments that I hoped would be surprising and illuminating, because they refuted the common assumption that we are all fundamentally rational." Nowhere does he define what he means by rationality. Is it the same thing as maximization? Or consistency? In a broad sense, one might argue that many of Ariely's subjects were behaving rationally when they chose what they wanted, even though they didn't maximize what they might have under other circumstances — it was simply that their rationality was highly context-dependent. And while context-dependent behavior may trip us

up from time to time, it's certainly a useful and adaptive trait much of the time.

Elsewhere, the book is less enjoyable when it wanders into Feynman-esque descriptions of the author's own charm, cleverness, or personal experiences.

While the account of his travails as a burn victim is vivid and occasionally horrifying, it serves primarily to distract from the rest of the book. Other anecdotes (How do I choose between MIT and Stanford? An old fellow student recognized me in a bar and thought I was a waiter!) are neither interesting nor informative. Sometimes the need to show off comes out directly, as in the chapter on free! stuff where the extra punctuation makes his point (over and over again). Or in the footnote where he reflects on "how much people confide in me." To be fair, not all the chortling left me cold — there's a hilarious section on the possibility of using your slightly-less-attractive friend as a decoy to lure more suitors. And the

writing is consistently clear and approachable.

Unfortunately, the general air of reasonableness and credibility is marred by decidedly unsupported statements such as "In recent years, we have seen business in general submit to a lower standard of honesty." Is this really true, or just an example of an old fogey griping about our degenerate age? There are worse examples of carelessness, if not outright chauvinism. He labels Iran, China, and Latin American as "societ[ies] without trust." Perhaps he meant that there was less institutionalized abstract trust of the kind that fosters efficient business transactions among strangers. Or perhaps he really did mean that there is less trust, period, between people in those societies.

In his eagerness to offer easy answers and neat summaries, Ariely leaves the deeper questions unplumbed. Is there an over-arching theory that can explain why we think the way we do? Why these particular irrationalities and not others? He doesn't hesitate to throw out solutions to our problems (war, unsafe sex, dubious business practices), but the shallow analyses address such a small slice of the larger problem that they are not particularly convincing. For example, does he really believe that the problems (even the most pressing ones — affordability comes to mind) of such a complicated hydra as the American health care system really be "fixed" simply by having people schedule preventive medicine appointments? Ariely writes that "simplification is one mark of real genius." It may be the only one this book exhibits.

In the end, I'm still not sure if the book is actually dumbed down, or if this is all Ariely has to say: "In a search for the root of this human condition, we decided to set up a series of simple experiments." So perhaps that's all there is: worth a flip-through at the airport bookstore.

CONCERT REVIEW

Languid Songs for Languid Lovers

Weathered and Wistful Performers at the MFA

By Balaji Mani

Keren Ann and Dean & Britta

Museum of Fine Arts

Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008

Last week's double bill at the Museum of Fine Arts brought to the stage two seemingly different, yet equally brilliant acts. I'd never witnessed such a divided audience before: young women and French-Americans anticipated Keren Ann's silky alto and crisp guitar, while middle-aged men — some reeking of marijuana — patiently awaited Dean & Britta's washy wall-of-sound. Personally, I was more of a Keren Ann fan, but nonetheless loved Dean & Britta's set of laid-back tunes.

During Keren Ann's last visit to Boston, she brought along Jason Hart on keyboards and Aviashai Cohen on trumpet. For her second North American tour supporting last May's self-titled album, Keren Ann properly represented her repertoire by substituting Hart and Cohen for a guitarist/bassist and drummer. Her eleven song set displayed not only her beautiful voice and clever songwriting talent, but her ability to create new and exciting arrangements for most of her songs. Most notable was "Notlita," which opened the show so quietly that one could hear the slight hiss of the house speakers oscillating in and out of Keren's haunting lyrics: "I think I'm going to bury you / or myself." Her guitar player added colorful flourishes, mimicking the strings on the studio recording. Most surprising though, was in the middle of the song when the full band kicked in, immediately changing the dynamic of the space.

Adding drums to a song that was once quiet and eerie took courage, but the band commanded attention as Ann continued to plead, "Somewhere I'd

like / to be called in safe." Having another guitar player allowed the thirty-something chanteuse to perform songs laden with lead guitar parts such as the dirty and brash "It Ain't No Crime," and the old favorite "Sailor and Widow." The former included Keren Ann switching to bass, prompting her to admit that "it's every girl's fantasy to play bass." She showed further prowess as a multi-instrumentalist by playing harmonica solos on "Lay Your Head Down" and the lazy, New York nostalgia track "Chelsea Burns."

On the records, Keren Ann sounds distant, sweet, and reassuring. As a female songwriter, she defies stereotypes by writing about issues such as war ("Where No Endings End"), her friendships ("Harder Ships of the World"), and personal discovery ("Que N'ai Je?"). Constantly changing her voice to fit different songs, she saved an airy, feminine sound for the self-revealing acoustic number "Not Going Anywhere." Her range seemed significantly improved since her last tour. Through minimal stage banter she admitted that a cold had helped her "reach the low notes." Her French fans in the audience could only revel in Ann's native tongue for one song, "Que N'ai Je," elegantly placed at the climax of the set.

By the last song, Ann's voice seemed a little tired but she finished the set firmly and beautifully. The guitar and drums faded out as Ann repeated the chorus to "Between the Flatland and the Caspian Sea," a gospel-like round of "oh Lord," in descending melodic fashion. The last "oh Lord" remained for a few seconds, as the audience became enveloped in Ann's deli-

cate voice, and then once again in the hiss of the house speakers.

A short intermission stood between Keren Ann and Dean & Britta's sets. Dean Wareham and Britta Phillips, both members of the now-defunct rock band Luna, released their second LP, Back Numbers, last year. They opened with a white-wash of sonic mania, a song aptly titled "Snowstorm." Wareham and Phillips traded lead vocals throughout the set, only rarely singing together in sedated harmony. On the Luna albums, Wareham sounds like a Lou Reed impersonator in a Sonic Youth cover band; he sang nonchalantly, with that ever-present scratch at the back of his throat cuing certain notes one way or another, in and out of tune. Yet it always fits with the taut, finger-picking style of his guitar.

In this band, Wareham preserves that same voice with a slight juvenile twist. His singing is more trained, and the songs are more about big, open sounds, as opposed to Luna's often tight guitar work. What probably contributes to this new sound is the fact that Wareham is the only guitar player; in addition to Phillips on bass, the band is completed by Anthony LaMarca on drums and Matt Sumrow on keyboards. Sumrow primarily played a Rhodes piano, in addition to a number of electronic instruments and synthesizers. LaMarca called no attention to himself, rarely smiling or looking at the audience during songs, but he skillfully switched between a variety of brushes, sticks, and mallets to accommodate the moods of the changing vocalists. Phillips took lead on the more dreamlike songs, such as "Singer Sing" and "White

Horses," where she sings "On white horses let me ride away / to my world so far away."

The highlight of the show, which excited most of the audience, was the performance of the Luna hit "Tiger Lily" during the second half of the set. Sumrow switched to guitar just for this song. Wareham blankly delivered the song, conveying more emotion through his trebly guitar solo. At one point his knees buckled and he crouched to the ground, never straying from his epic solo. He even made efforts to play with his effect pedals for the end of the classic song. Overall, Wareham's vocals were low in the mix, and Phillips' bass was a bit too high, but the music came across clearly. The last song, "Strange," climaxed in swirling guitars and keyboards, showing that Wareham and Phillips had in fact moved on from Luna and were trying something new.

The group came back out for an encore, "Bonnie & Clyde," a song performed in French, save for the silly, childish chorus where Wareham and Phillips call out to the eponymous criminal duo. Wareham left the stage looking pleased and Phillips stayed back a bit with the rest of the band to receive the audience's second standing ovation. Depending on whom you sat next to, this was either a Keren Ann show, or a Dean & Britta show. Regardless of the sound, both acts proved to be accomplished musicians, performing in that romantically drudging persona of the traveled and experienced songwriter. Though Ann is a bit younger in terms of her introduction into the real music world, these acts both sing songs that are at times darkly comical or deeply personal, but always wistful.

Solution to Crossword

from page 9

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Pseudoscience

by Daniel Klein-Marcuschamer

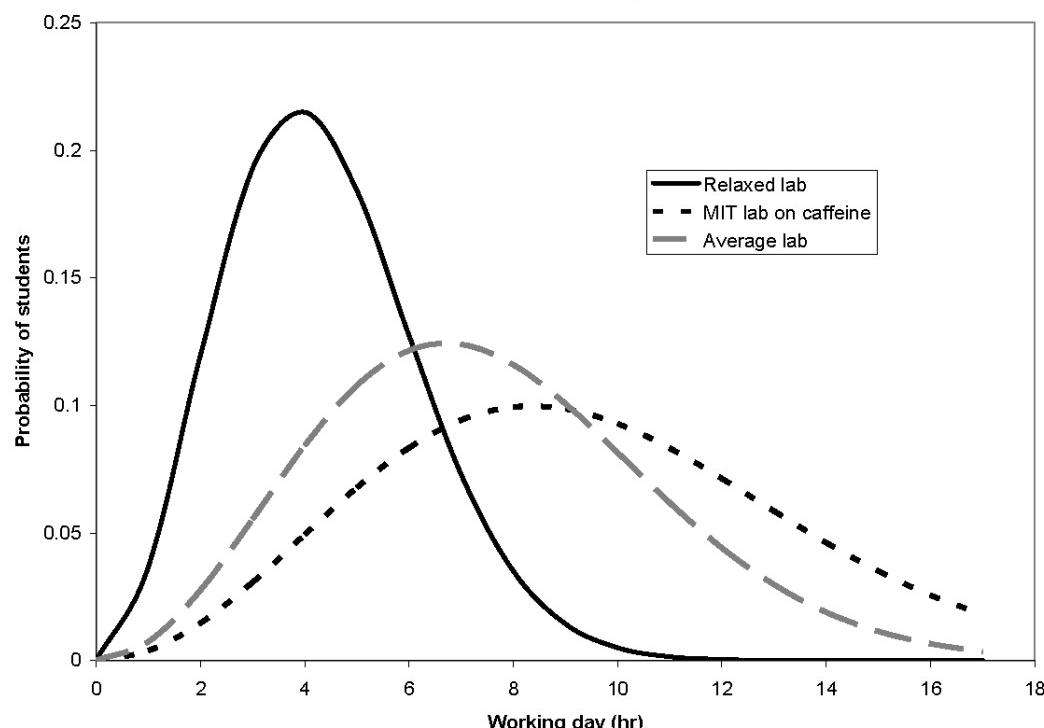
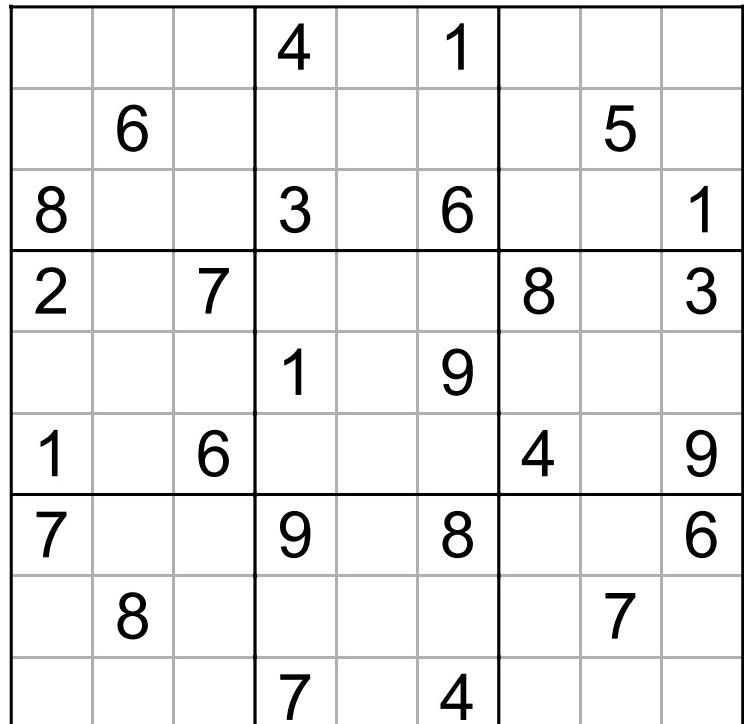


Figure 26. The plot shows the probability of finding students working a certain number of hours per day, according to the lab they work at. Note that the working day refers to actual work and, therefore, procrastination is not taken into account. We suggest that the distribution could be derived by assuming that grad students behave as independently moving particles in a confined volume (i.e. the lab premises). As the pressure increases (e.g. from a competing lab or an advisor), so does the probability of finding students with long working days, and the shape of the curve changes accordingly. The result is a (Maxwell-Boltzmann) distribution in which students with more energy (intrinsic or not) also work longer days. Similar derivations have been obtained by McMullen J., Papageorge A., and Loewer V., *Proceedings of the 152nd Muddy Charles Symposium*, Cambridge, Jan. 2008.

sudoku

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Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

Solution, tips, and computer program at <http://www.sudoku.com>; see also solution, page 14.

Steal My Comic

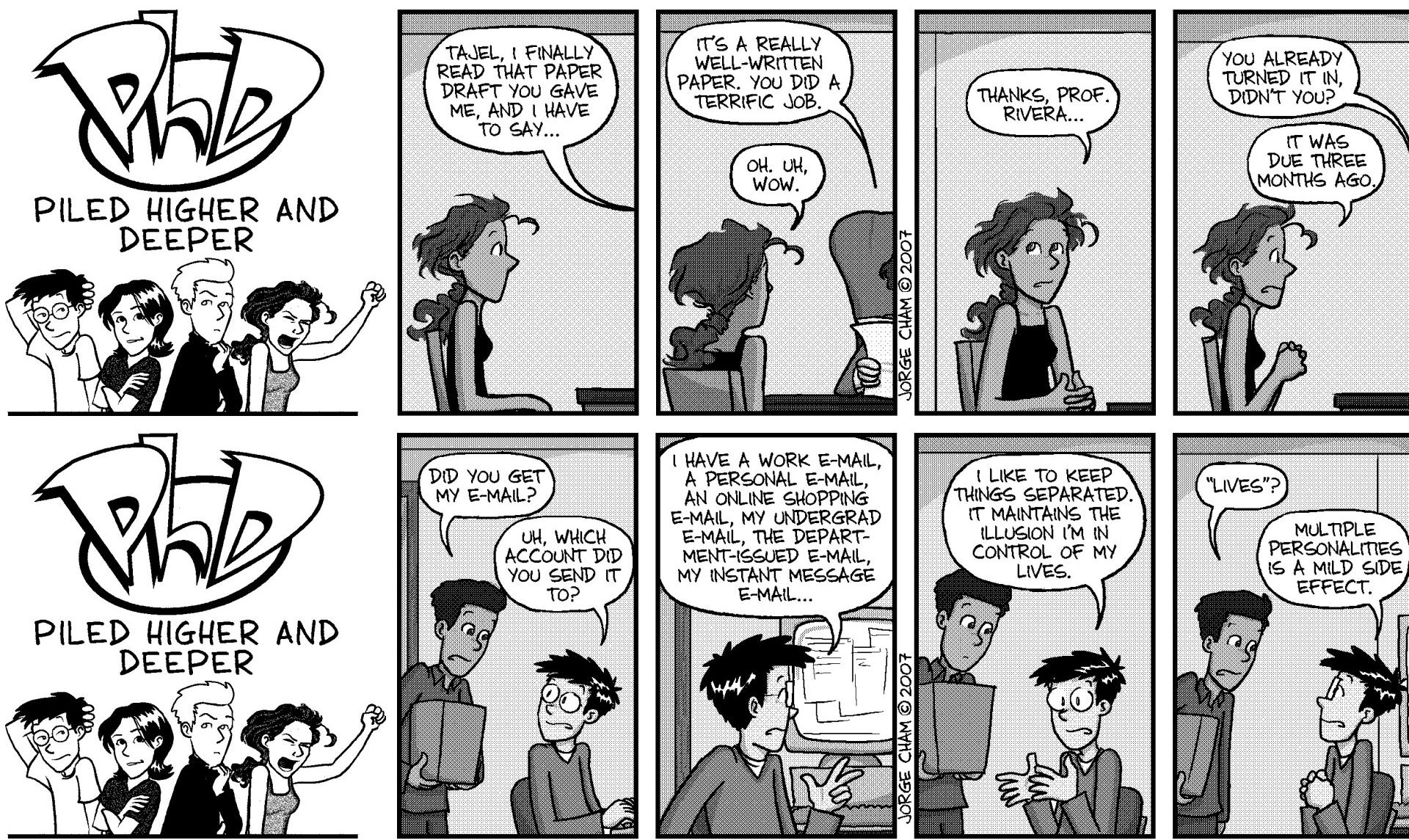
by Michael Ciuffo



The Tech congratulates Uno, the first beagle to win best in show at the Westminster Dog Show!

Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Dilbert® by Scott Adams**Crossword Puzzle**

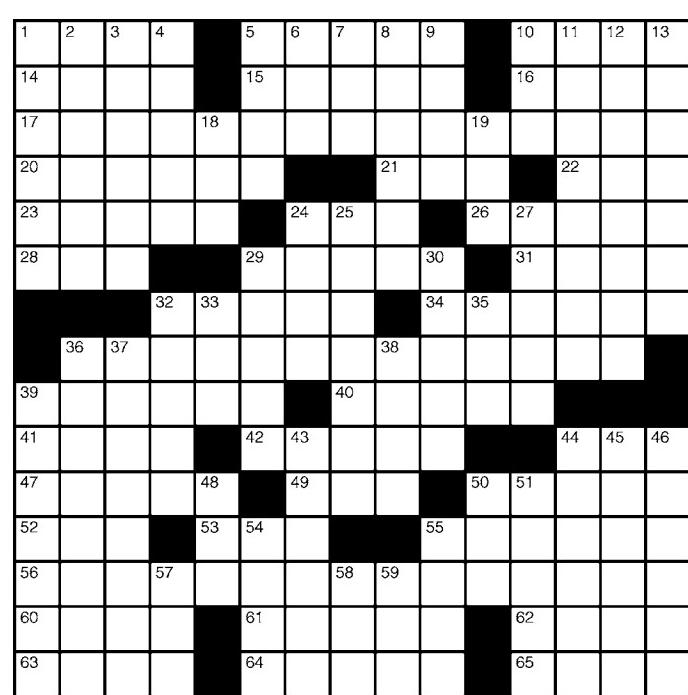
Solution, page 7

ACROSS

- 1 Rules of conduct
- 39 Shaving foam
- 5 Game similar to keno
- 40 Refuse
- 41 Punta del ___, Uruguay
- 10 Activist
- 42 Burstyn or Barkin
- 14 Spanish river
- 44 Handle clumsily
- 15 City in Provence
- 47 Cubic meter
- 16 __ Stanley Gardner
- 49 Massive ref. work
- 17 Judgment call?
- 50 Big Apple
- 20 John Jacob and Mary
- 51 Homily topic
- 21 Highlands hat
- 53 Carte preceder
- 22 5th or Lex.
- 55 Oater bar
- 23 Minuscule
- 56 Judgment call?
- 24 Black, but not blue
- 60 Turn-downs
- 26 Philippine island
- 61 Deserve
- 28 GI's garb
- 62 Oh, yeah
- 29 "It Happened One Night" director
- 63 Old dagger
- 31 Tiny arachnid
- 64 Spoiled kids
- 32 Arcade pioneer
- 65 Tail of a lob?
- 34 Grabs
- 36 Judgment call?

DOWN

- 1 Smoothly, in music
- 2 Mistreated
- 3 Gets off a letter
- 4 Wise lawgiver
- 5 Prolonged barks
- 6 Time-line segment
- 7 Capp and Capone
- 8 Gods' beverage
- 9 Workplace safety grp.
- 10 Word with Bingle or Alte
- 11 Form a labor union
- 12 Raised
- 13 Night flights
- 18 Test out
- 19 Elec. measure
- 24 Delhi garb
- 25 Letter
- 27 Anabaptist sect
- 29 Core group
- 30 Man from Manchuria
- 32 Son of Jacob
- 33 PGA prop
- 35 Snaky turn
- 36 Skillet material
- 37 One who showed up
- 38 Sitcom equine
- 39 Instructional sessions
- 43 Repair-shop car
- 44 Writer Marcel
- 45 Actress Renee
- 46 Cold time
- 48 One of Dumbo's wings
- 50 U.S. defense grp.
- 51 Czech composer Haba
- 54 Arm or leg
- 55 Places
- 57 Opposite of WNW
- 58 __-la-la
- 59 Chart-topper





Mariachi Internacional del Tecnológico serenades President Susan Hockfield for Valentine's Day.

Researchers Locate Distant Solar System That Resembles Ours

By Dennis Overbye

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Astronomers said Wednesday that they had found a miniature version of our own solar system 5,000 light years across the galaxy — the first planetary system that really looks like our own, with outer giant planets and room for smaller inner planets.

"It looks like a scale model of our solar system," said Dr. Scott Gaudi, an assistant professor of astronomy at Ohio State University. Gaudi led an international team of 69 professional and amateur astronomers who announced the discovery in a news conference with reporters.

Their results are being published Friday in the journal *Science*.

The discovery, they said, means

that our solar system may be more typical of planetary systems across the universe than had been thought.

In the newly discovered system, a planet about two-thirds of the mass of Jupiter and another about 90 percent of the mass of Saturn are orbiting a reddish star at about half the distances that Jupiter and Saturn circle our own Sun. The star is about half the mass of the Sun.

Neither of the two giant planets is a likely abode for life as we know it. But, Gaudi said, warm rocky planets — suitable for life — could exist undetected in the inner parts of the system. "This could be a true solar system analogue," he said.

Dr. Sara Seager, a theorist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who was not part of the team, said that "right now in exoplanets we are on an inexorable path to finding other Earths." Seager praised the discovery as "a big step in finding out if our planetary system is alone."

Since 1995, around 250 planets outside the solar system, or exoplanets, have been discovered. But few of them are in systems that even faintly resemble our own. In many cases, giant Jupiter-like planets are whizzing around in orbits smaller than that of Mercury. But are these typical of the universe?

Almost all of those planets were discovered by the so-called wobble method, in which astronomers measure the gravitational tug of planets on their parent star as they whirl around it. This technique is most sensitive to massive planets close to their stars.

The new discovery was made by a different technique that favors planets more distant from their star. It is based on a trick of Einsteinian gravity called microlensing. If, in the ceaseless shifting of the stars, two of them should become almost perfectly aligned with Earth, the gravity of the nearer star can bend and magnify the light from the more distant one, causing it to get much brighter for a few days.

If the alignment is perfect, any big planets attending the nearer star will get into the act, adding their own little bumps to the more distant starlight.

That is exactly what started happening on March 28, 2006, when a star 5,000 light years away in the constellation Scorpius began to pass in front of one 21,000 light years more distant, causing it to flash. That was picked up by the Optical Gravitational Lensing Experiment, or Ogle, a worldwide collaboration of observers who keep watch for such events.

Ogle in turn immediately issued a worldwide call for continuous observations of what is now officially known as OGLE-2006-BLG-109. The next 10 days, as Andrew P. Gould, a professor of mathematical and physical sciences at Ohio State, said, were "extremely frenetic."

Among those who provided crucial data and appeared as lead authors of the paper in *Science* were a pair of amateur astronomers from Auckland, New Zealand, Jennie McCormick and Grant Christie, both members of a group called the Microlensing Follow-Up Network, or MicroFUN.

Somewhat to the experimenters' surprise, by clever manipulation they were able to dig out of the data not just the masses of the interloper star and its two planets, but also rough approximations of their orbits, confirming the similarity to our own system. David P. Bennett, an assistant professor of astrophysics at the University of Notre Dame, said, "This event has taught us that we were able to learn more about these planets than we thought possible."

As a result, microlensing is poised to become a major new tool in the planet hunter's arsenal, "a new flavor of the month," Seager said.

Digital Evolution

Craig R. Barrett
Chairman, Intel Corporation

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MIT Announces Plans for Energy Efficient Buildings

Town Gown, from Page 1

formed into a new undergraduate dormitory. According to Amster, "we didn't anticipate that it was going to be a renovation." The plans for that project are still in the first stages. "We're going to go out and procure a builder and architect," said Amster. Ashdown is expected to reopen for students in two years.

Each of the universities' representatives talked about their plans to decrease the impact on the environment by reducing energy use. The universities referred several times

to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, administered by the non-profit U.S. Green Building Council. The LEED system rates buildings on a standardized scale, based on "sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, and indoor environmental quality," according to the USGBC Web site.

The Brain and Cognitive Sciences Building, which is three years old, received the LEED silver rating, according to Amster. New Ashdown

is expected to "get LEED silver," according to Amster. One of the peculiar energy challenges faced by MIT involves the fact that laboratories "require five to ten times the air changes of normal office buildings," he said.

Amster stated that another challenge for MIT is the competitive nature of research. "We have to be flexible and quick so that once we find a researcher and a need, we need to move quickly to find a lab for them," he said. Amster said buildings with large floors instead of towers facilitate interdisciplinary collaborative research.

Steven C. Marsh, the managing director of real estate at the MIT Investment Management Company, presented on MIT's real estate ventures in Cambridge. According to Marsh, the Investment Company has "become a little more defensive in the last year and a half,"

and sold some of their holdings in Cambridge, such as the Hotel@MIT, which is now called Le Méridien.

MIT, like the other universities, is focusing on improving street-level retail stores. Some recent retail additions to the MIT community include Citibank and the restaurants Sebastian's and Cosi. MIT and the City of Cambridge collaborated in 2007 on the Central Square Theatre, a new black-box theatre being built that will house two professional theatre groups. MIT owned the land and was the site developer for the project, according to a May 2007 MIT News Office article. Marsh said that the theatre project, combined with the increased retail presence, will "add some vitality" to the community.

According to Marsh, the Investment Management Company is "busy preparing some of our properties for lease." These include 640 Memorial Dr. (which is currently

leased to Millenium Pharmaceuticals) and 1 Broadway. Last year, 1 Broadway was damaged in a severe fire caused by the explosion of an NSTAR transformer. It has taken an entire year for the permanent power to be replaced in the building and now the Investment Management Company is "thinking about streetscape and façade" to improve the appearance of the building, said Marsh.

Although the MIT Investment Management Company is decreasing its holdings in Cambridge now, it will "continue to pursue Cambridge investments over time," said Marsh.

MIT's presentation to the Cambridge Board was well received by both the members of the Board and the Cambridge residents who were present. The Board did not raise any complaints to the MIT presenters, but they did bring up complaints about Harvard and Lesley.

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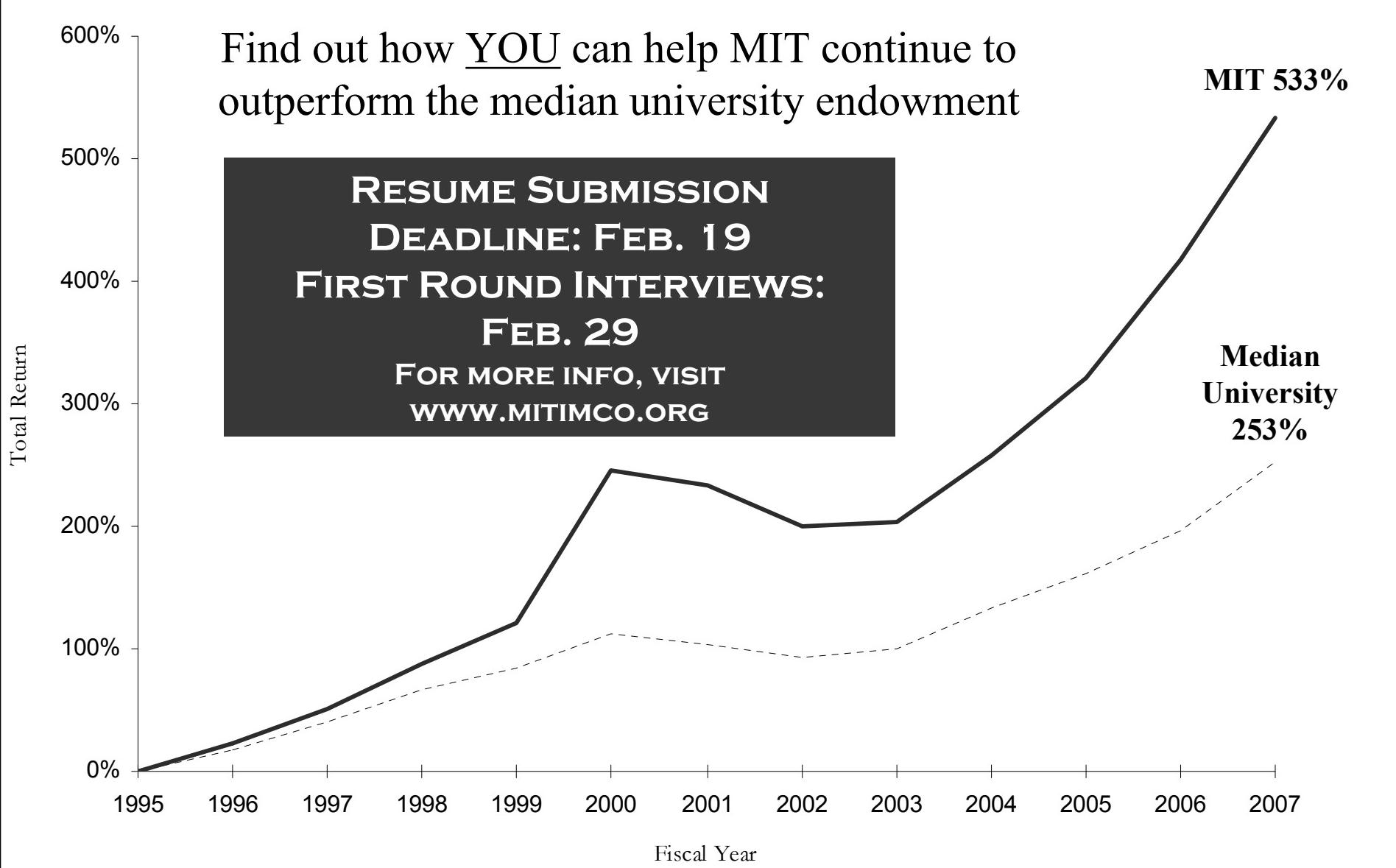


MARTHA ANGELA WILCOX—THE TECH
Lauren M. Biscombe '09 and Erich Mueller '09 participate in the Valentine Partner Yoga event sponsored by the Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) on Wednesday.

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MIT Investment
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Dining Has Offered TechCASH Services To Star, Papa John's

TechCASH, from Page 1

dozen letters from students and will be delivering them within the next two weeks.

"I think it's a long shot at best," commented Berlin, who described the entire negotiation process as an "uphill battle." "It's probably not going to happen because a good relationship is something that comes naturally," he added. "We've made our arguments and talked to them about it, but it's much easier for us to approve an outside vendor [who approaches us] vice versa."

Berlin has also approached Star Market on multiple occasions dating back to October 2003. Star Market and Bertucci's may have similar reasons for refusing TechCASH, said Berlin. Berlin speculated that the infrastructure of Bertucci's and Star registers may "back up to a central server, which may not synchronize with TechCASH technology."

Berlin cited the recent addi-

tion of the Beacon Street Subway as a success story. The Subway at the intersection of Beacon St. and Massachusetts Ave. began to accept TechCASH on Monday, Feb. 11. According to Berlin, both the Beacon St. Subway and the store inside Lobdell Food Court are franchised to the same owner, and adding TechCASH to the Beacon St. Subway was part of the original contract between the Subway owner and MIT.

"If Bertucci's doesn't want it, then maybe one of its competitors does," said Berlin. Negotiations are ongoing with Papa John's in Somerville and look far more promising, since Papa John's approached MIT as opposed to the other way around, said Berlin.

Once negotiations are complete and a contract is signed with any vendor, the rest of the process is very fast, said Hoffman.

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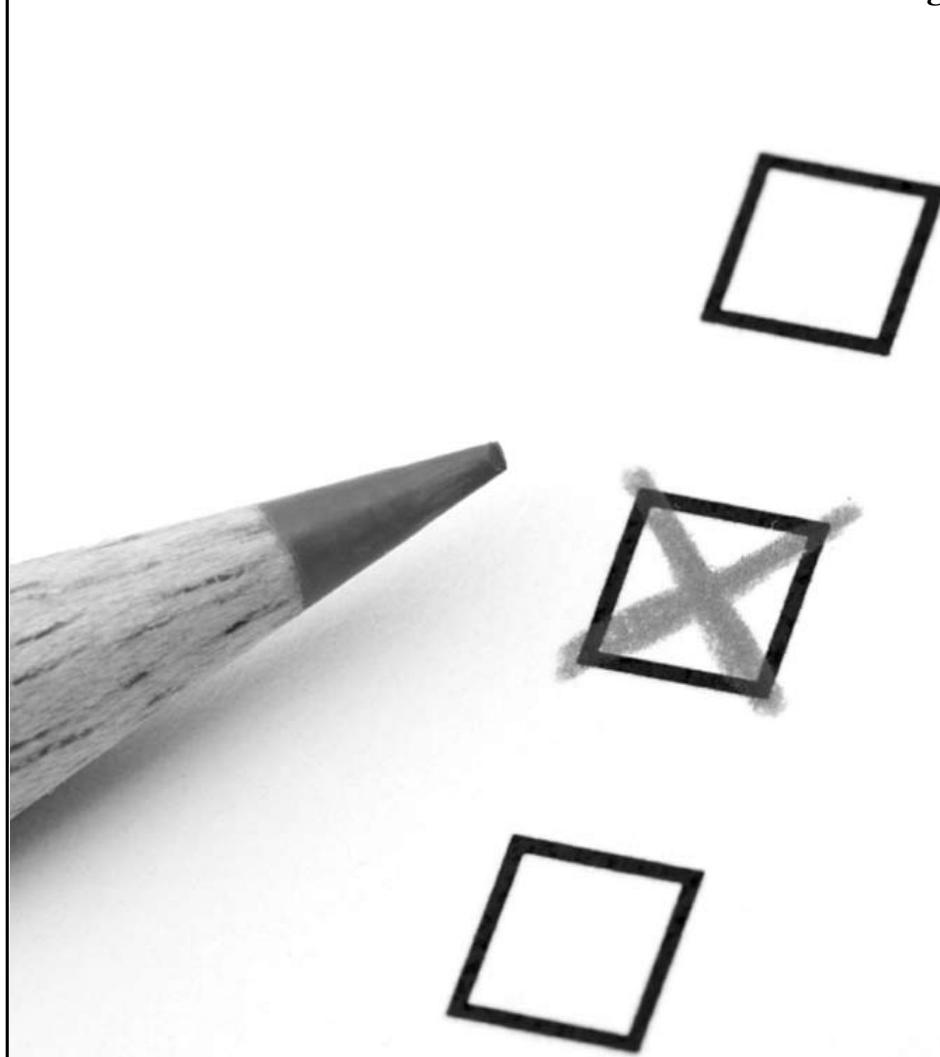
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ERIC SCHMIDL—THE TECH

MIT hackers put up 'Y-combinator' plaques, a lambda mobile, and sheets of paper with the 'Last Will and Testament of Sir Arthur Peckington' in Lobby 7 on Sunday morning. The hack commemorated the end of the introductory computer science class 6.001.

All Subway Employees Undergo Week-Long Sandwich Training

Subway, from Page 1

of changes.

It was suggested that a manager stay on site 24/7 to ensure that there would be someone in charge at all times. Hoffman said, "Students complained that employees weren't as friendly as the customers expected them to be." One particular complaint — sometimes employees would socialize instead of working and fail to realize the presence of a customer — was addressed by the installation of at least two video cameras over winter break, according to Holmes. Subway owner Aymen Rajeh assured that he would "replace the current employees if they continue to have problems," said Holmes.

According to Richard D. Berlin III, director of Campus Dining, the friction between Subway and its customers is also partially due to students' lack of preparation at the counter. Due to Subway's highly customized sandwiches, ordering often takes longer than at other fast-food restaurants, especially during the lunch and dinner hours.

Berlin said, "People can help by knowing what they want." Rajeh echoed this sentiment, saying, "We

[Subway] can go as fast as you [the customer] can go."

Rajeh explained that new employees undergo a week-long training period, during which they learn how to perform every step of custom sandwich-making, from baking the bread to presenting the final product. They then specialize, which expedites the food-making process — but all that doesn't help if the customer doesn't know what they want.

One particular change to address this issue has been the addition of "the works," referring to all the vegetables on the menu, according to Rajeh. By using the phrase "the works minus onions," for example, the customer can both save time and avoid a chance of miscommunication.

Since the restaurant's improvements, neither Rajeh nor the UA has heard feedback. However, if further problems are brought up, the UA will work to address them immediately, said Holmes.

The meeting with Subway also addressed future campus-wide discounts and promotions, such as the 50 percent off sandwich promotion during finals week in December. Subway's involvement with the student body helps demonstrate how

appreciative it is of MIT's business, said Holmes. Rajeh agreed: "Subway works with a lot of student organizations, and we're always happy to help."

Already, the Subway at MIT has a higher daily volume of customers than any other in the greater Boston area. However, their prices match the standard rates for Subway restaurants nationwide. Rajeh admitted that establishing a Subway in a new environment required a trial period, during which the restaurant learned MIT's preferences. He said, "In any new neighborhood, we have a learning curve."

The other restaurants in Lobdell, such as Shinkansen and Sepal, have implemented an efficient system of taking orders and preparing food — something Subway hopes to achieve with the help of the student body, according to Rajeh. This includes the recent implementation of Tech-CASH at the Subway located at the intersection of Beacon St. and Massachusetts Ave.

No major changes are planned for the restaurant in coming months, but Hoffman and Rajeh continue to exchange communication to ensure that Subway smoothly integrates into the MIT community.

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Solution to Sudoku

from page 6

5	3	2	4	8	1	6	9	7
4	6	1	2	9	7	3	5	8
8	7	9	3	5	6	2	4	1
2	9	7	6	4	5	8	1	3
3	4	8	1	2	9	7	6	5
1	5	6	8	7	3	4	2	9
7	2	4	9	1	8	5	3	6
9	8	3	5	6	2	1	7	4
6	1	5	7	3	4	9	8	2

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School Put Into Effect Security Plan Designed for Such A Crisis

Shooting, from Page 1

campus, which sits in a snow-filled, rural community 65 miles due west of Chicago, said three weapons were found with the man's body — two handguns, including a Glock, and the shotgun. He had ammunition left over, the police here said.

The gunman had been a graduate student at the university in 2007 but was no longer enrolled, Peters said.

Desiree Smith, one of the public university's more than 25,000 students, said she saw students fall down around her as the gunman opened fire. She tried to crawl away, she told a local television station, CLTV, thinking she was going to die, then wondered if she should play dead before getting up to run out of the classroom.

Smith said the gunman was wearing a black beanie cap or ski cap. She said he aimed, right off, for one person: the classroom instructor.

Other students told of a chaotic scene in which panicked students dropped to the floor, the blood of victims spattering on those who escaped injury.

"This thing started and ended within a matter of seconds," said Donald Grady, the chief of police at the university.

The class in Cole Hall had been an introductory offering, and most of the 162 students registered for the course had likely been freshmen or sophomores, said Jonathan Berg, chairman of the department of geology and environmental geo sciences.

Berg, who was about two blocks away from Cole Hall in his office when the shooting began, ran over and found injured students sitting on sidewalks outside waiting for ambulances. Some had bandages on their heads, he said.

Berg said an instructor and a teaching assistant were inside the classroom along with students; he said he believed the instructor had

been wounded, but not seriously.

In the moments after the shooting, university officials put into action a detailed security plan created for just such an incident, Peters said. Many universities and colleges around the country designed elaborate lock-down and notification plans in the days and weeks after a student at Virginia Tech killed 32 people on that Blacksburg campus, the worst shooting rampage in modern American history.

"This is a tragedy," Peters said. "But from all indications we did everything we could when we found out."

Shots rang out inside Cole Hall shortly after 3 p.m. (Central Standard Time), Peters said. At 3:07 p.m., the campus was ordered into a lockdown, he said. At 3:20 p.m., he said,

the university posted an alert on its Web site, through its e-mail system, and through another campus alarm system: "There has been a report of a possible gunman on campus. Get to a safe area and take precautions until given the all clear. Avoid the King Commons and all buildings in that vicinity."

By 4 p.m., Peters said, the police had determined that there was only one gunman, now dead, and issued another message to students at 4:14 p.m.: "Campus police report that the immediate danger has passed. The gunman is no longer a threat."

The authorities here canceled classes for the rest of the evening and Friday. Counselors had been called in, they said, and counseling was already being offered in every residence hall by Thursday evening, they said.

Leaders at the school said the events in Virginia a year ago had shaken many, but also led to lots of focus on security and the possibility of such an incident.

"Since Virginia Tech, people have had time to think about how to respond to these things, so it's fresh

on everybody's mind," Berg said. "And they're trying to do everything they've been talking about for the last few months."

Police officers arrived at the classroom within two minutes, Grady said, adding that even with elaborate plans, it might be impossible to entirely prevent such violence.

Students here had heard of threats at the school late last year, a fact that left some wondering whether there might be some connection to what had happened on Thursday. Last December, university officials canceled classes for a day during final exams after someone scrawled threats in a dormitory bathroom, including a reference to the Virginia Tech massacre and a racial slur. The police here said on Thursday that they had no reason to suspect a connection.

Chartered in 1895, Northern Illinois University has more than 25,000 enrolled students, 91 percent of them from inside the state of Illinois.

In Springfield, Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich declared a state of emergency after the shootings, offering state relief for expenses and the state emergency management agency to offer help.

"The state of Illinois will provide whatever assistance and support is necessary to university staff and students, and to local officials," Blagojevich said.

Here, officials and students said they had yet to even start to come to terms with all they had seen.

Outside the dormitories on Thursday evening, it looked like the last day of school. Students streamed out of dorms carrying backpacks and luggage. A caravan of parents made its way onto campus to meet them, and many waited for their children in idling cars.

"You don't think it's going to happen at your university and you certainly don't think it's going to happen in your department to people you know," Berg said.

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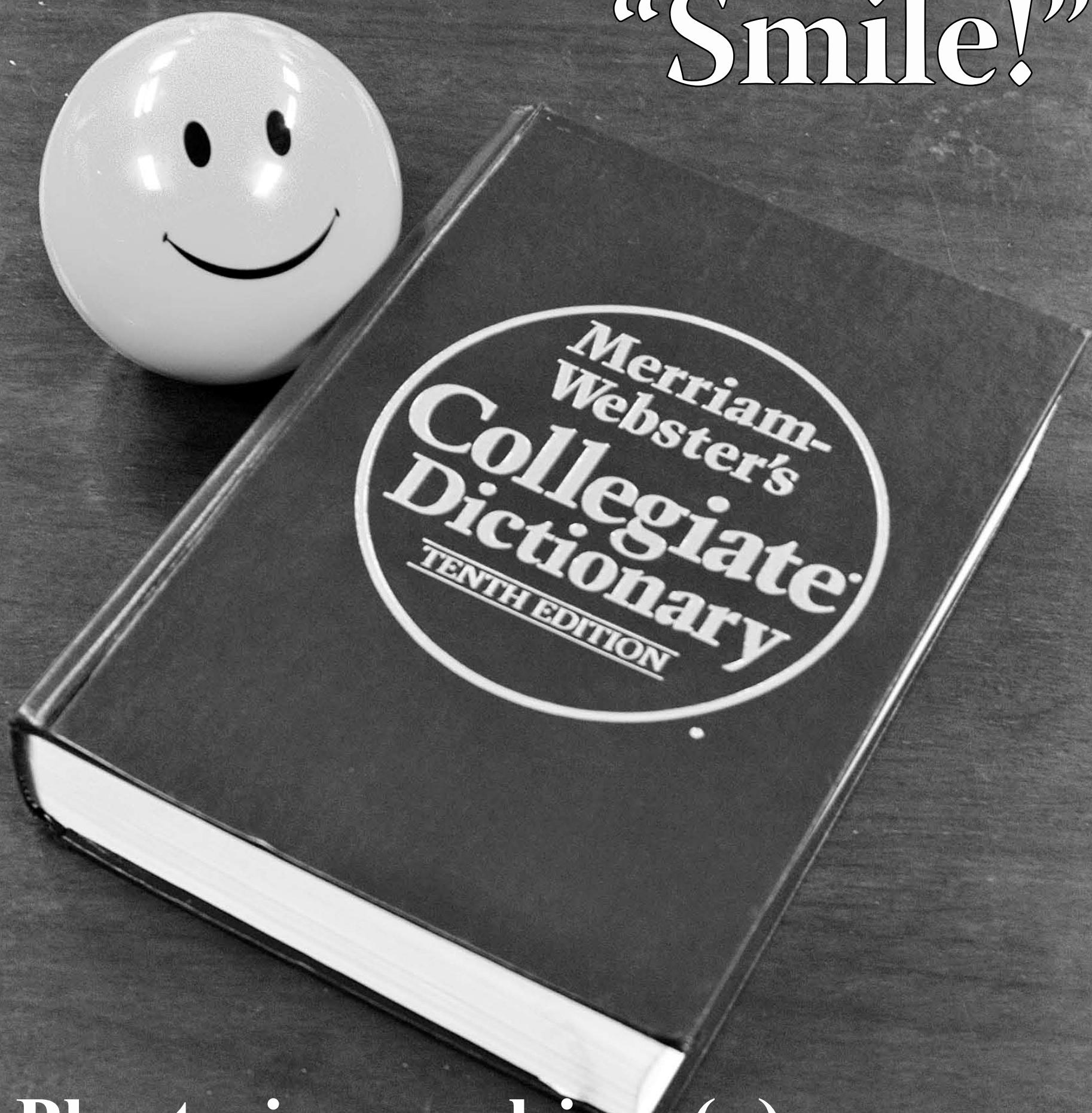
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Suns Acquire Shaq, Lakers Obtain Gasol To Stay Competitive

NBA, from Page 20

guard Devin Harris and Jerry Stackhouse. The Mavericks have all the parts they need to make a title run right now, and I expect them to do well in the playoffs.

The Phoenix Suns pulled off a massive trade to bolster their title hopes last week. While NBA fans have enjoyed the Suns' entertaining play for the last few years, the franchise has not won the Western Conference title since 1993. Consequently, the front-office decided to trade away one of its stars, Shawn Marion, in a package for superstar Shaquille O'Neal. It remains to be seen whether this trade will propel the Suns to a title, but one thing's for sure though — watching Steve Nash and the Suns come playoff time will be exciting.

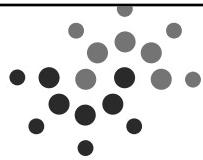
The Los Angeles Lakers also made a big move before the trading deadline. Their deal was more of a steal though, getting the talented Spaniard Pau Gasol from the Memphis Grizzlies for next to nothing. With Gasol, this team is now one of the best in the West. Kobe Bryant is

playing well enough to finally earn his long-overdue first Most Valuable Player award, and the Lakers bench is arguably the best across the league.

There are several other quality teams in the West. New Orleans has been brilliant, led by this year's best point guard Chris Paul (sorry Steve Nash). Paul and the Hornets should be a tough match for anyone in the playoffs (if they get there). The Utah Jazz also have a young stud at point guard, Deron Williams. While they have played brilliantly in spurts, they still lack a few essential pieces to go all the way.

The Denver Nuggets aren't top contenders, but they can still be a factor in the playoffs with Allen Iverson and Carmelo Anthony leading the way. Baron Davis has played superbly for the Golden State Warriors, but don't expect a repeat of last year's playoff run when they knocked off top-seeded Dallas. The Houston Rockets continue to be a quality team but they just haven't improved enough to be a serious contender.

It remains to be seen how the West will be won, but as a fan, it sure does make for compelling viewing.



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SPORTS

Game of the Week: Youth Leads Men's Ice Hockey Over Endicott

By Jeff Lemieux

DAPER STAFF

In a battle for supremacy in the NorthEast Collegiate Hockey Association Conference A East Division, MIT's freshmen contingent proved to be the difference, as the men's ice hockey team slipped past Endicott College 2-1 on Saturday night.

The Defenseman Nicholas D. Sisler '11 assisted on the game-tying goal before fellow freshman Cory F. Phinney '11 netted the winner, while rookie goaltender Stephen L. Yablonski '11 stopped 26 shots to earn the victory.

The Gulls took the lead early when Chris Garofalo scored his 13th goal of the season. Their lead did not

Why this is Game of the Week:

The Engineers pulled through in a tough divisional match-up, with key contributions coming from young players. The win puts the team in great position heading into the playoffs.

last long however, as the Engineers scored two quick-fire goals to take the lead midway through the opening period. Nicholas R. LaBounty '09 scored the equalizer, notching his team-leading 19th goal of the season with Sisler providing the lone assist. Michael C. Kozlowski '08 and Dustin P. Kendrick '10 then assisted Phinney on the game-winning goal just minutes later.

The rest of the contest belonged to the goaltenders, with Yablonski

and Endicott's Josh Provost turning away all shots to keep the score at 2-1. Provost made 37 saves to keep the Gulls within striking distance, but Yablonski shut the door to lower his season goals against average to 1.43.

The Engineers' record improved to 12-3-0 overall and 8-2-0 in the division with the win, solidifying its place atop the standings. Endicott concluded its regular season schedule with records of 10-10-1 and 5-4-0.

MIT finishes up conference play this Saturday at Westfield State College, followed by a tough match-up at home against Division I opponent Boston College. The game will provide good preparation for the Engineers going into the NECHA playoffs, which begin the last week of February.



STEVE HOWLAND—THE TECH

MIT's top-ranked squash player Andrew Yoon '10 returns a deep shot against Brown University's Adam Greenberg on Tuesday evening. Yoon lost his match 3-1 as Brown went on to defeat the Engineers 9-0.

Figure Skating Club Dances Into Sixth Place as Samost Earns Silver

By Diana S. Cheng

TEAM MEMBER

The MIT Figure Skating Club team tied for sixth place with Pennsylvania State University at the Boston University Eastern Intercollegiate Figure Skating Competition, held on Feb. 9-10 at the Walter Brown Arena. MIT finished with 13 points, with several skaters finishing in the top five in free skate and

solo dance events to contribute to the point total.

Captain Aubrey L. Samost '10 led the team with three medals. In the Novice Dance event, her fox-trot earned her a silver medal as she finished second in a field of eleven skaters. She placed third in Intermediate Dance, with her performance of the "Hickory Hoedown," and in the Novice Free Skate, skating to a George Gershwin medley. Her free skate featured a double salchow/Axel

jump sequence, double jumps, and a layback spin.

Kristina K. Brown '10 contributed two points with her two fifth place finishes in Juvenile Dance and Pre-juvenile Free Skate. Her free skate to music from Disney's *Happy Feet* included a circular step sequence, Lutz jump, and a camel-change-up-right spin.

Saja A. FakhralDeen '09, Jingyi "Cynthia" Tang '09, and first time competitor Elizabeth R. Boroson '09 skated the Canasta Tango to finish fourth, fifth, and sixth respectively in Preliminary Dance.

Performing their free skate for the first time in competition, Kachina C. Gosselin '10 and Tang finished sixth and seventh in the Preliminary Free Skate event, respectively. Their programs included five jumping elements and two spins.

Dartmouth University won the competition with 103.5 points total, followed by Cornell University (72 points), Boston University (68.5 points), and the University of Delaware (66 points). Boston College placed fifth with 16 points.

The next Eastern section competition will take place at the University of Delaware the first weekend in March.

Spurs, Suns Striving for Supremacy Amid Struggle Atop Western Conference

By Dennis L. Ramdass

The NBA's Western Conference is having one of its most competitive seasons in recent years. Don't believe me?

Column Just look at the frequency of lead changes in the standings or the constant jostling for position in various power rankings across the press. The term "wild, wild west" has never been more applicable, but let's try to make the picture a little clearer.

The are four elite teams in the West: the San Antonio Spurs, Phoenix Suns, Dallas Mavericks and Los Angeles Lakers. While each of these teams has stood out from the rest of the conference, none of them has been able to establish undisputed ascendancy over the others.

The San Antonio Spurs, last year's champions, are a modern day basketball dynasty, having won three of the past five NBA titles. The Spurs haven't exactly turned heads with their play thus far, prompting some NBA pundits to proclaim their decline. I disagree.

San Antonio will take its game to another level over the second half of the season, as the team always seem to do. As long as the Big Three of Tim Duncan, Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili are healthy, the Spurs will remain the team to beat in the playoffs. The team is seeking to win back-to-back championships for the first time in franchise history.

The division rival Dallas Mavericks should have something to say about the Spurs' quest to repeat. Their meltdown in the playoffs last year, coupled with a drop-off in regular season performance compared to last year, has made many skeptical about their title chances. Dallas fans, however, look at the positives from the first half of the season — Dirk Nowitzki's improved passing game, Devin Harris's all-around improvement, and the productivity off the bench.

The Dallas front-office should resist pulling the trigger on any trade for All-Star Jason Kidd that involves giving up their talented, young point

NBA, Page 19



Guard Kimberly E. Soo Hoo '08 takes the ball down the court against Jill Walsh of Babson College on Senior Night last Wednesday, the final home game of her career. The Engineers jumped out to a large lead early and held on in the final few minutes to win 52-49.

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Friday, Feb. 15, 2008

Wrestling vs. Western New England College,
U.S. Coast Guard Academy 6 p.m., duPont Athletic Center

Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008

Men's Track and Field Coed Invitational
12 p.m., Johnson Athletic Center

Women's Track and Field Coed Invitational
12 p.m., Johnson Athletic Center

Women's Gymnastics vs. Rhode Island College, Boston University
1 p.m., duPont Gymnasium

Squash vs. University of California, Berkeley
4:30 p.m., Zesiger Center

SCOREBOARD

Men's Basketball

Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2008

Babson College (8-13, 5-4 NEWMAC ¹)	75
MIT (12-11, 3-7)	62

Women's Basketball

Monday, Feb. 11, 2008

Newbury College (2-19)	40
MIT (10-11)	75

Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2008

Babson College (10-12, 5-5)	49
MIT (11-11, 3-7)	52

Squash

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2008

Brown University (5-9)	9
MIT (2-11)	0

Northeastern University (4-6)	9
MIT (2-11)	0

¹New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference

Playing sports is fun. Writing about sports is more fun.
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